

VISIT...

LANZAROTE  
*Caliente*.COM



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

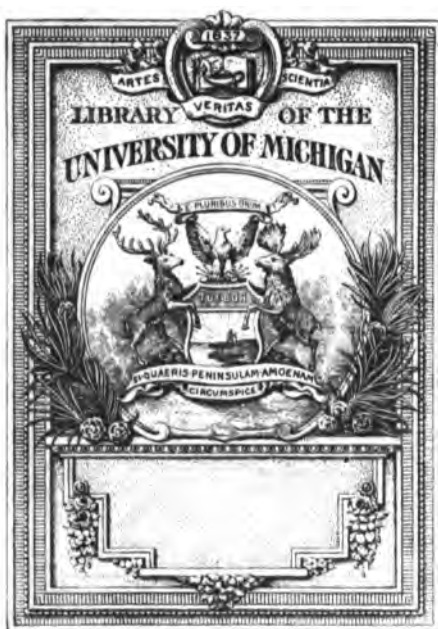
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



85.8  
L67352



# ESSAYS IN FURY



# ESSAYS IN FURY

BY

ARTHUR D. LEWIS



LONDON

SWAN SONNENSCHN & CO. LIMITED  
PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

1904





031 Jan 11 E.S.

## PREFACE

READER, try to give me a fair hearing. Should my manner in the body of the book ever offend you, it is possible that my summary, by providing a barer explanation of what I am aiming at, may help you to believe that I wrote only because I thought what I wrote to be true.

The two essays, "Men and Animals" and "A Letter to a Sunday-School Teacher," are not "in fury."



# CONTENTS

|                                                                                      | PAGE |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| AUTHOR'S SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INTENTIONS<br>OF THE ESSAYS . . . . .                   | ix   |
| 1. ON WAR . . . . .                                                                  | I    |
| 2. AN ESSAY FOR LAZY PEOPLE                                                          |      |
| PRELUDE . . . . .                                                                    | 7    |
| I . . . . .                                                                          | 10   |
| NOTE ON REASONABLE SYMBOLISM<br>AND THE BREAKING OF A GLASS<br>AT WEDDINGS . . . . . | 84   |
| II . . . . .                                                                         | 85   |
| III . . . . .                                                                        | 105  |
| IV . . . . .                                                                         | 124  |
| V . . . . .                                                                          | 128  |
| NOTE ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS .                                                       | 160  |
| VI . . . . .                                                                         | 161  |
| NOTE ON THE BLOOD ACCUSATION .                                                       | 212  |
| VII . . . . .                                                                        | 213  |
| CONCLUSION . . . . .                                                                 | 216  |
| 3. AN ATTACK                                                                         |      |
| I . . . . .                                                                          | 221  |
| II . . . . .                                                                         | 224  |
| III . . . . .                                                                        | 225  |
| IV . . . . .                                                                         | 227  |
| V . . . . .                                                                          | 228  |
| VI . . . . .                                                                         | 231  |
| 4. MEN AND ANIMALS . . . . .                                                         | 232  |
| 5. A SERMON . . . . .                                                                | 238  |
| 6. A LETTER TO A SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER .                                             | 242  |



## AUTHOR'S SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INTENTIONS OF THE ESSAYS

### ON WAR

THE main idea of this essay is that war decides which of two armies is the more efficient, not which represents the juster cause. If war be a good means of settling a dispute, ought we not to settle private disputes by combat also, and let the stronger man win? Neither any court of international arbitration nor law courts within a nation can be infallibly just, but they do make some attempt to decide causes according to reason and not according to brute force. War inflicts injury on people who do not know what the dispute is, and acts as though we imprisoned the relatives of a criminal, for it fights any Frenchman if there is a quarrel with a few governing Frenchmen. War encourages savagery.

### AN ESSAY FOR LAZY PEOPLE

The main intention of this essay is to show that if our civilisation progresses we must discover that the *supernatural* sanction for morality is worthless and that there is a more certain basis for right conduct because, more and more as society progresses, the happiness of all is necessary for the happiness of one. You will note that I say "the *supernatural* sanction," although in the essay I have been compelled to chiefly attack the Bible religions only.

The *Prelude* explains briefly the various steps of the argument and that the title is meant to suggest that the whole essay contains nothing original, but in a compressed form gathers together many arguments all leading to one conclusion.

I. In this section all the miracles in the gospels are examined, and it is shown that they are based on ideas similar to those which can be found in many other places. It is inferred that to simpler and more undeveloped minds life offers fewer possibilities than it does to us, and that the

same ideas occur all over the world to minds in the same stage of development. Dr Johnson declared that he did not care to read about savages because they were all alike. As gradually an idea of order in nature is arrived at by accumulation of experience, the older idea that every phenomenon is due to the action of a consciousness like that within ourselves is considered false, but the older ideas are transferred from ordinary everyday statements to exceptional miracles in the lives of heroes. A myth is a traditional account which has been distorted by being handed down through many narrators; the distortions are characterised by the culture of the age in which it is so handed down.

The immaculate conception is briefly compared with tales told in China and Peru; the guiding power of the star which appeared to the wise men is explained by early belief that stars are alive and guard specific people; the baptism of Jesus is compared with similar ceremonies from many parts; the "opening of heaven" suggests a first consideration of ancient Jewish conceptions of the form of the universe.

The "fasting in the wilderness" is then shown to be a universal custom for the very purpose of obtaining inspiration; the whole nature of subjective visions, such as dreams, having been long misunderstood by mankind.

Several less important matters are then touched on: the number 40 in the Bible, the development of the angels, the resemblance between the old Persian religion and modern Judaism.

Next, the principle is explained that after the conquest of one religion by another the deposed god (or gods) cannot be obliterated from men's minds, but become demons, devils, superstitions, or mixed with subordinate powers, such as fairies. The devil has now got Pan's shape.

This leads to "devils as the cause of diseases," and healing by holiness or power. It is next suggested that the holy and unclean of the Bible are much the same thing—only, while the holy belongs to the dominant religion, the unclean belongs to the conquered religions. In short, that this is another example of a principle already explained. (Fantastic as this idea will appear to those who have never heard it before, I am convinced that it is true.)

The raisings from the dead and the quieting of the

tempest are next briefly considered ; then follow remarks on the early idea of the power of names which were considered to be the property of the being to whom they belong ; while all property was endowed more or less with the same faculties as its owner. This idea is due to the fact that in early tribes every member of the tribe, hunting in a pack with the others, is dependent for all food on the luck of all the other members. Just as the tribe is *one* to a degree not conceived by us, so are the man and his property one. The next question considered is : "What was God before he became the sole God of the Jews?"

The miracles of inexhaustible food are compared with parallel cases elsewhere. The idea of the crucifixion as a sin-offering leads to a consideration of sacrifices in general. It is assumed in the Bible that the meaning of sacrifices is known ; the forms of different sacrifices are commanded, but the intention of all sacrifices is not explained. They are based on the same idea as the blood covenant : two men who drink of one blood have then one life in both of them, and neither may harm the other. Similarly, sacrifices eaten with a god unite god to the worshipper. The stages of development of this idea are considered, more especially as illustrated in the Bible itself.

This leads to the sacrifice of atonement offered on the day of atonement, which for obvious reasons is here used as a basis for an explanation of Hebrew ideas of atonement instead of the crucifixion, which, strictly speaking, is the author's subject.

Certain other sacrifices are then examined in relation with the bread and wine of the communion ; parallels are found for the resurrection ; and savage ideas of what death is account for the belief in immortality. Some explanation follows of heavens and hells, of the immaculate conception (more carefully considered), of the doctrine of the Trinity, and of sundry Old Testament stories : Samson, Elijah's chariot of fire, the earth opening its mouth, and the waters of Marah. The section ends with a plea for impartiality.

*Note on Reasonable Symbolism and the Breaking of a Glass at Weddings.*

II. The main theme in this section is that the mind is part of the body. It begins with a brief consideration of the uniformity of the laws which act alike on the lowest and highest forms of matter. It then attempts to show



that we can to some extent explain how nerves and, later, consciousness might arise; how will, memory, and ideas might arise; and how the more complex emotions and ideas may be analysed.

The reader is then asked to consider that if one part of the brain is destroyed consciousness ceases; that sleep, the effects of alcohol, of narcotics, and of weakness show that what acts on us physically produces also effects known in consciousness, just as we should expect if the mind is part of the body.

The development of the soul-idea is considered and some consolations offered for a death which is death—a death which leaves us neither to suffer nor to enjoy.

The author declares that he teaches this “materialism” for the sake of spirituality.

III. The third section is an imaginative interlude in the form of a dream. After several incidents, which have little significance as regards the argument of the essay, the dreamer passes through the forest of metaphysical ideas, human dreams, and mental images, and arrives at the edge of a precipice; beyond it lie the three flat stages of heaven, earth, and hell. The Christian, Mohammedan, and Jewish heavens are described. On earth he beholds the worship of a stone; and later of a god, who is adored by means of a sacred ballet; then follow strange scenes of devil worship and sorcery. In the trial for witchcraft which succeeds, the ideas of substitution and of so-called sympathetic magic, which are connected with the Biblical idea of sin-offerings, and with several other Biblical tales (the brazen serpent, several sacrifices, etc.) are further exemplified. (See Section I.)

The dreamer witnesses also a massacre of Jews. The angels, confused and horrified at the smoke rising on all sides from burning witches, Jews, and heretics, refuse to praise God. God rebukes them; they continue their song; but, being confused and trembling, their psalm of praise is preposterous—like a parody.

The dreamer declares God is only a dream; defies him; calls him “a being of the mind”—and awakes.

IV. Here the ethical teachings of Christ are arranged according to their subjects. It is then apparent that they are consistent one with another; and history can explain why the circumstances of Jesus' times should have led to such teaching. It is also obvious that there are no

Christians. The section concludes with a plea for consistency and pity.

V. This section makes a rather poor attempt at being in the form of a dialogue. It is concerned with the basis of ethics without supernatural revelation. Virtue, it declares, is the search for happiness ; it is the search for beauty and harmony ; it looks forward to the future ; it recognises that pain may be essential in the virtuous individual, but only when it helps to aid the greater pleasures of future generations and of the whole of society. Numerous questions likely to occur to modern minds are suggested by the dialogue : the injustice of inheritance without merit and merit without inheritance ; State interference and its limits ; the freedom of the will ; the necessity of beauty for true morality. It is hoped that this section, inadequate as it is, may be of real help to a mind passing from an older to a newer view of morality.

*Note on the Ten Commandments.*

VI. This section is a history of Christianity from the time of Christ to the present day, and as it only occupies about forty pages it is obviously open to much criticism. The main principles which I try to explain are :

There were reasons why a Messiah should have appeared to the Jews just at the time of Christ.

There are reasons why Christianity spread.

Its later progress was due to the use of force and the commands and examples of kings.

From the earliest times Christians have not been able to agree what Christianity is.

When Christianity was powerful it was cruel.

Religious tolerance is not due to the religious bodies but to the growth of the power of the State in relation to the power of the Church, which was encouraged by the Reformation.

The Christian Church preserved always the manners and thoughts of a more barbarous age.

The quarrel between the Church and science is no new thing ; and many movements often considered as religious have had political intentions.

*Note on the "Blood Accusation."*

VII. A digression on missionaries in China. And if one religion is really far superior to another, can a nation be "converted" from the lower to the higher unless their whole mental outlook is changed and their powers of

understanding all things developed? Can this gradual process be helped by people who do not understand the lower ideas of those whom they have to teach? It is possible to break down and confuse a lower morality without effectively teaching a higher one.

*Conclusion.* The whole argument of the essay is finally summed up. The whole conclusion of the matter is suggested by the following sentence:—

“We shall be right in calling vice a discord and disease of the soul,” says Plato. It is not a supernaturally forbidden deed, but it is a naturally bad one—injurious, unhealthy.

### AN ATTACK

The attack in this essay is twofold: it is an attack, on the one hand, on the sexual immorality of fornication, and an attack, on the other hand, on disgusting prudishness. It is an attempt to reconcile, to unite in harmony and simplicity, the two bad impulses, the two extremes of action and reaction, which we can hardly imagine to have ever been avoided.

I. Scenes in the life of a prostitute. The first cause, monotony of life, and ignorance (she is represented as born in Belgium, and unable to read), vanity, violent emotions following seduction, then utter absence of emotion, tastelessness of life.

II. Is there not an English view of such things which combines paying for sin with virtuously damning those who provide it? (English manners in foreign countries are like a rich man visiting a workhouse.)

III. Puritanism, if it hastens to condemn, reveals its dirty-mindedness. Clothes are more indecent than nudity, and they exaggerate the difference between the sexes. The ideas of decency differ entirely in different places and ages.

The inconvenience to an artist of modern ideas of decency. The Greeks and great artists found beauty in the naked human figure; most of us find *nothing* at all except indecency—may it not be our fault?

IV. A mixture of monogamy and promiscuity, as at present usual in Europe, is of all ways of arranging sexual intercourse the most disgusting.

V. The contrast between excitement and permanent emotion as exemplified by an imaginative narrative of a

labourer's visit to a country fair and return home to his wife and child.

VI. Monogamy's main advantage is that it tends to promote sympathy throughout society, while other modes of arranging marriage do so in lesser degrees.

The real basis of the evil is economic—that is, it rests on the dishonesty of those who underpay women, because women impulsively overcrowd slightly-skilled trades.

### MEN AND ANIMALS

Men have often had one morality governing their actions towards those of their own nation and another for use towards foreigners, and at the present day men do not always act in the same way towards members of their class as towards members of another class, still less do men act towards animals as if they were men. Hence all the general rules of morality are ineffective when we try to make people apply them to their treatment of animals. We may, however, apply another test of conduct—the cultivation of that degree of sympathy which will enable us at present to aid in the progress of humanity.

No civilised man ought to derive pleasure from inflicting pain. The fox-hunting country magistrate imprisons a man for working a horse in an unfit condition.

The values of sympathy and of vivisection are considered.

Some reasons are given why the English are less cruel to animals than some other nations, and why I do not admit as a fixed rule that animals suffer less than human beings would.

### A SERMON

Most people's religion is a kind of "make-believe"; they believe by dismissing at times all evidence which would disturb belief, just as they do while enjoying a piece at the theatre or a romantic book. Faith is usually understood to mean regarding as more certain what some very dimly-seen people, such as Moses, Matthew, or Luke, said than what all reliable people say. If anything miraculous ever happens, if order does not exist, knowledge and reasoning are at an end. Why eat dinner? An impossible tale in Hebrew is no more credible than if it were in Chinese, but

many people cannot see this. Hence, if I were to believe in Christianity, I should have to believe in *all* religions—they all tell me things which I consider impossible.

#### A LETTER TO A SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER

*No one can deny that in spite of much teaching of morality not everyone is sufficiently impressed to be always able to do right. If, then, I can say anything which will be of use in teaching anyone, you ought to listen to me.* Although the idea of ever reasoning about morality makes many impatient, it is an imperfect realisation of the harm done by wrong which makes many so careless of right. Every wrong makes it harder for society to exist. Thought enables us to see this. Every dishonesty helps to ruin the trade of the country. There is a duty of self-development by pleasure. *When people are unable to get the higher pleasures they take the lower, hence the great importance of providing proper pleasures in the lives of the multitude.* Music-hall performances considered and condemned, yet there is a large audience for them.

Finally, the essay questions the ordinary idea of the Pharisees as derived from the gospels, and concludes with a plea for reason, intelligence, beauty, and the harmonious development of all the powers of man.

# ESSAYS IN FURY

## ON WAR

ALL those who have one spark of manly feeling and are susceptible of admiration for straightforward actions must have viewed with delight the energy with which all classes responded recently to England's call to arms, and the devotion which has been called forth from so many by the trumpet-call of our nation's needs. Far be it from me to dwell on the inevitable sufferings that are caused by war—the burning of houses and crops, the pillage, the dying of untended wounded among the dead and covered with flies, the deaths and diseases caused by exhaustion, by wounds and mutilations; for war, which aims at the glorious infliction of injury on the enemy, necessarily involves the deplorable sufferings of our own innocent soldiers and horses—but let me dwell rather on the noble qualities which war encourages and on the virtues which might cease without its stimulating influence. I myself would wish men to fight in the streets in order not to forget in times of peace the virtues which they had learned in war, in order that courage and Christian virility might increase among us. It may be objected that the higher virtues of nations are not suitable for individuals, and that there is no power which can enforce justice in the dealings between nations, whereas within a state the majority of citizens are willing to impose and make binding on all a certain legal degree of righteousness. I shall reply that these distinctions between public and private virtue are being rapidly destroyed; that all civilised peoples are learning to maintain a more extensive code of international law; that the idea that what is privately wrong may be politically honourable is becoming less readily accepted; and that as European public opinion grows, injustice between nations is less and less tolerated. But that the best armed, the best provisioned,

the best commanded army should conquer in any quarrel or lawsuit between nations, and not that which represents the cause of the righteous,—this is devoutly to be hoped by all who respect the will of God and who would discourage weak-kneed sentimentalism. I should like to see the bully and the well-fed blackguard overcome the milk-and-water weakling, and no longer let the policeman and the magistrate so constantly protect the merely honest, innocent, or wronged valetudinarian. Let the big, strong armies win, and not the weak, small, and honest ones.

Despite the fact that as our arms improve courage and physical skill become less valuable in war, so that in military as in civil life money and brains tend to replace strength and courage, war enables us to exercise and keep alive manly qualities—I had almost said savage qualities, for these solid and vigorous parts resemble primitive savagery—which else might die: it gives opportunities of displaying skill, coolness, endurance, and discipline in the hunting and killing of our fellow-men. It provides also much amusement for the spectators, so that the pale-faced drudge may hiss and hoot his enemies, and listen to songs of defiance in music-halls, and mock at their portraits before his soldiers have beaten them, and afterwards; and when ten men kill one enemy his English voice is raised in an uproar of delirious joy, he hastens to celebrate carnivals of rejoicing, and no longer considers the many defeats which are yet to follow. War encourages art and journalism. It provides an occupation for our noblest classes, and for classes who at other times are liable to be corrupted by idleness and indifference: it gives good subjects for poets to sing about; and, as Charles Lamb relates that formerly the Chinese obtained roast pig by burning down their houses, so do we brace our nerves, stimulate our imaginations, and reanimate our love of civilised virtue and active honesty by killing, robbing, injuring, by a return to the decision of disputes by means of combat and endurance (which in earlier days were the means usually chosen to discover the better of two causes), and by restoring to ourselves for a little while an activity which the wild animals enjoy. War kills part of a too abundant population, and tends to remove the strongest and bravest, and so to give better opportunities to the weak. It, of course, increases the demand for means of destruction and for all things connected with the trade of destroying. It may ruin the

defeated, but it may also open up new markets to the conquerors. It stimulates national pulses with the tonic emotions of hatred, self-satisfaction, and triumph over the misery of others.

War serves not only to provide a savage amusement and a brutal occupation and to promote the spread of Christianity and of commerce, but also to decide the important question of the relative power and efficiency of the contending armies.

Thieving will never cease, and murder will never cease; so long as there are men there will be some thieves and murderers. So long as there are nations war will never cease. Let us then not trouble to discourage thieving, murder, uncharitableness, and war, knowing them to be in accordance with the present condition of human nature. Let us suppose that what is can never be improved. Let us not listen to dreamers who tell us how thieving, murder, war and all that causes them might be decreased. Let us not listen to scientists who tell us of the gradual evolution of society from savagery to our present condition. Let us not observe the influence which education and public opinion exercise on men's thoughts, actions, and principles. Let us rest assured that in the divinely ordained order of things murder and fornication and war have, so far as we know, always hitherto had a place in human affairs, and let us not dare to hope to improve what has since time immemorial produced a little right mingled with much wrong.

But it may be that if war continues to exert its glorious influences the methods of waging war may yet be improved. It is often objected that the cost of fighting is very great, and I imagine, therefore, that a plan which would make war *profitable* would be received with a widespread and most sincere welcome. As wars are intended to prove the relative powers and efficiencies of the contending armies, would they not be greatly improved if, of the two factors that lead to victory, by which I mean chance and skill, the former could be eliminated, so that skill alone caused victory, and it were always the best, the strongest, cleverest, most enduring and persistent army that conquered, and all those innumerable accidents which at present distort the value of the movements of the combatants could be entirely removed? This would practically be attained if wars were waged by parties of a convenient size in public places of amusement, the methods of fighting



being governed by definite regulations, which could be enforced by umpires. In this way the cost of war would be greatly decreased, as there would be no need to transport men over deserts and mountains and to feed them in inaccessible places, but they, their food, and their weapons would only need to be taken to the world's market-places, to its largest cities. The money taken at the doors, the prices paid for admission to these shows of historical interest, would, I believe, entirely balance the cost of the war. It must be remembered that different soldiers would often be able to use the same weapons on different occasions; that, when performers of eminence or known courage were to appear, the prices charged could be increased; and that the excitement caused by fighting before an applauding audience would no doubt render many soldiers more willing to fight for fighting's sake, for glory, and for the sake of that fame which the numerous newspaper reporters and critics who would be present at the shows would be certain to give to any soldier who distinguished himself. The wounded and dying could be removed to convenient hospitals—they could be driven from the stage door to the hospital door: those who know anything of wars as they at present are will see the significance of this. Imagine the patriotic enthusiasm and imperial fervour that would be roused when royalty were present and applauded in person the valour of its army! No doubt before any performance priests belonging to the two rival nations would implore heaven to vouchsafe its aid, asking God with their usual honesty and sincerity to help their army for the sake of him who taught us to love our enemies, and if any man hit you on one cheek to turn the other to him, and if any man force you to go one mile with him to go two miles, and if any man takes your coat to give him your cloak also, and do not resist evil. (I quote from memory, but you will probably understand me.) I am pleased to have introduced this idea to the attention of the public, since I am aware that in the main these remarks will be accused of being commonplace, of needlessly echoing an almost universal shout. But, unfortunately, all who wish to gain a cheap reputation or to pose as peculiarly wise men, hasten to contradict what everyone says, and are often able, by inventing nicknames or striking phrases, or by means of harmonious rhetoric, to perplex the current of popular opinion. I feel certain, however, that

all will be attracted by my notion for making war profitable. The profits might be increased in a manner which I have not yet mentioned,—I have often felt disgusted at seeing performing animals at music-halls, knowing them to be trained by abominable cruelty. If, in accordance with the rules established to regulate my system of war at places of entertainment, prisoners were taken by the opposing combatants, could not these prisoners be trained to appear and be jeered at in the music-halls of the conquering nation? After long consideration of the taste of such audiences in the principal cities of Europe, I feel certain that the appearance of these prisoners would be an attractive item in the programme of any variety entertainment. They might perhaps be engaged to kill one another. At any rate, I hope that they would replace to some extent poor cats and dogs.

Not only would I thus bring war near to us, and (as I previously said) contrive to have its advantages in times of peace by means of street fights, but I would introduce the principle of war into ordinary life—that is, I would have people revenge injuries done to them on those who did *not* do them. In private life if anyone hits you on the head you are forbidden by law to revenge yourself and hit him; whereas, if the peace is broken between two civilised nations, vengeance is inflicted, not on the offenders, but on innumerable innocent people who hardly know why they are fighting. Now, this excellent principle should be more generally followed. If a Frenchman takes your watch, any other Frenchman ought to be imprisoned until the watch is returned to you. The French, on the other hand, ought to imprison any Englishman until you declare you do not want your watch—they may keep it. It is obvious to any reader that this would be justice, and similar to the proceedings of civilised nations.

In conclusion, let me again remind all who have manly feelings how much we gain by war. All must cherish it who view with delight whatever favours blackguardism and who sorrow at the melancholy progress of our age; all who hate the brother of a criminal and would punish his cousin; all who say “How shocking! How terrible” when a railway accident or a shipwreck has occurred, and rave with joy, perhaps shouting and howling all night, when a great victory has caused far more suffering, both through the *number* wounded and through the *intensity* of their sufferings; all

who view with dismay the spread of lackadaisical feeling, languid thoughtfulness ; all these, as well as all who love their country with a love which though often silent is ever deep and true, must join with me in the feeling that nothing can be nobler than to torture men, and nothing more likely than war to aid in the progress of humanity in dispelling ignorance and in correcting injustice. They must join with me in hoping for the abolition of law-courts and police, in order that in private disputes the advantages of war may be obtained, in order that the grand and noble virtues of fighting may be evoked in our streets to settle all those commercial differences of opinion, to avenge all those wrongs inflicted by passion, which at present in the tents of Themis lead only to the anæmic arbitrations of long-hesitating and much-considering justice instead of being settled by finely rash and savage purple hands of violence. And by a beautiful arrangement of divine providence, whenever violence is employed, we are rewarded by fresh need of violence ; for, far from being convinced of the error of his opinion and the injustice of his cause, the conquered is rendered by defeat only more obstinate, supposing himself not to have been tried and condemned but only to have been bullied, sat upon, beaten by might and overwhelmed ; he will call upon God to defend the right, he will ask the Lord to avenge the blood of those who suffered for the sake of the Lord's cause, and will wait until he has regained strength and accumulated power. Every action of the conqueror is a fresh cause for hatred ; his every unmeaning motion is a new incentive to holy contempt, righteous vengeance, and renewed slaughter. Thus shall we be purged from the pusillanimous decrees of law, from the order of watery, lackadaisical civilisation, from the pale sickliness of thin and stagnant-blooded thought, from the unpractical and crazy deliriums of priggish contemplation and science, from the monotony of harmonious commonwealth, from the unmanly exercise of intellect and cunning skill ; we should be restored to the constant influence of rousing evil passions, to the perpetual presence of noble and mighty bloodshed and brawling, to the beautiful healthiness of trying to hurt one another ; and if towards an end, so eloquent to all of its own excellences, my poor words have served to direct the attention of anyone, its glorious effulgence, I hope, may serve to blot out the bare weakness of my intruding presence.

# AN ESSAY FOR LAZY PEOPLE

## PRELUDE

"There is a most absurd and audacious method of reasoning avowed by some bigots and enthusiasts, and through fear assented to by some wiser and better men; it is this: they argue against a fair discussion of popular prejudices, because, say they, though they would be found without any reasonable support, yet the discovery might be productive of most dangerous consequences. Absurd and blasphemous notion! As if all happiness was not connected with the practice of virtue, which necessarily depends upon the knowledge of truth—that is, upon the knowledge of those unalterable relations . . . that every thing" (bears) "to every other."—BURKE.

AN essay for lazy people,—I mean by that, that it is not intended for people who know much about the subjects of which I shall write,—although theologians and clergymen may read it. I hope, like Pharaoh, to show that what Moses or Jesus did with the help of God many medicine men and magicians have done with the help of their gods; for, having reached a certain development, the human mind is everywhere confronted by certain problems, to which its weak powers can only find a few solutions, and all religions inherit these early, holy errors, for they retain as miraculous episodes in the lives of exceptional persons early ideas which savages suppose to represent the ordinary events of life. I shall show that man has no soul, that the mind is part of the body, and that consciousness, thought, and emotion are the subjective sides of what we see objectively as nervous movements; that there is a series of progressive advances from the lowest, most dead forms of matter to the highest, most conscious forms, and that there is no sudden break between mineral and plant, or between monkey and man; that man is not immortal and death need not be feared; that man is not utterly corrupt; that God, the ultimate cause, is "unknown and unknowable," and that it is impossible to say that he knows, sees, hears, is angry, or forgives. (I fear that the profound truth of this part of the essay will be attested by its dullness.)

I shall show that there are no Christians—but there may

be one or two ; that we can find far better, firmer, and more operative causes for acting rightly than those given by religions ; that unselfishness is a vice when it weakens a man's powers of helping and confers no benefits ; that you must resist evil and protect society against injustice ; and therefore that it is wrong to give a man your cloak if he took your coat ; that as the mind is part of the body every thought is an act, healthy or unhealthy, increasing or decreasing your powers of enjoyment ; that in the struggle for existence societies composed of those who help one another harmoniously, who are brave and healthy, must conquer or replace societies composed of those who quarrel with and kill one another or who are cowardly and unhealthy, and that morality has therefore been evolved in men according to the ordinary laws of the universe ; that God, the first cause, cannot be said to be either moral or immoral, just or unjust, since morality regulates the actions of men, so as to increase their happiness, and it is not probable that all things arose from a creature like a man ; that happiness is the reward for health, strength, size, fitness, virtue, and a good liver ; that we know nothing except through its effects on ourselves.

I shall show that the most prominent followers of Christ have not been good men ; I shall tell how most of Europe was converted to Christianity by the sword, by forcible baptisms, by bribery, by the destruction of Pagan temples and confiscation of Pagan privileges and public funds, by burning, and by the commands and examples of kings ; how from very early times Christians were divided into sects, who, in order to discover the nature of Jesus, or of the Holy Ghost, or to settle other important matters, killed, tortured, banished, gibbeted, mutilated, or burned one another whenever the secular powers were pious enough to allow them to serve God in these ways ; how they burned, tortured, and exiled, forcibly baptised, and robbed Jews and Moors in order to teach them that God is love and to avenge the death of the Saviour,—and these exilings of entire communities produced deaths from starvation, exposure, and exhaustion ; how the Crusaders, waging a holy war, plundered, murdered, tortured, massacred, and waged war with a holy savagery ; how witches, who were usually hysterical, unpopular, or mad women, were tortured, burned, drowned, and pricked by order of the Church—that is, by order of both Roman and Reformed clerics and clerical

authorities ; how the Reformation, although it was partly a movement against anointed crime, holy corruption, and sacred beastliness, was strengthened and extended by political causes ; how the Reformers loved their enemies in a Catholic manner by burning, exiling, robbing, and imprisoning ; how the Church, reformed or unreformed, has always opposed every increase of knowledge ; how the Reformation weakened the power of all churches, for reason and orderly government profited by religion's dissensions, and so led to freedom of thought and to advance of knowledge, but how every fresh advance was denounced and opposed by prominent followers of Christ, according to their powers and the conditions of their age ; and, in short, how the progress of society is in inverse proportion to its piety.

I shall say nothing new, but I shall save the lazy reader (whom I shall assume to be not *too* well informed) some expenditure of effort and leisure in reading many long and learned books. I shall show that, as people acquire knowledge of science—that is, of actual phenomena, and of the way in which, by reason and evidence, we learn to perceive phenomena—the recognised religions will change. But reason is only that process of thought which agrees with the universal arrangements of actual occurrences (in so far as we have any experience of them), so that, to speak simply, I shall show that the recognised religions will go as soon as words and theories and faith are made to represent facts, and are no longer carelessly accepted from ages of savagery, and in acquiescence with thoughtless people round us. No doubt they are going at present ; but there is still an Archbishop of Canterbury, missionaries, libraries of new sermons and theological discussions, sects arguing one with another, and many people deluded and believing in lies.

Happiness and life depend on a knowledge of truth, for they depend on a knowledge of the relations that everything bears to every other, of the relations between ourselves and the rest of the universe, which are such, that if we would live we must change, so as to keep in definite conditions with reference to the external, changing world, and in harmony with the universal law.

## I

"It is not in possibilities but in man that we must study man: we must not imagine what he could do or ought to do but see what he does."—DE BROSSES.

"Truth is for humanity: error for its time."—GOETHE.

To understand mythology is to admire it. But what to early minds were *probable guesses* at the unknown, or, according to their view of nature, *certainities*, are contradicted by all that our knowledge has acquired: ceremonies and symbols and myths become false and dead. It is a long time before men acquire that conception that we term "Nature"; to the early mind there is little order, plan, or unity in the universe; they have no conception of settled and inevitable sequences of occurrences: the universe is to them full of incoherent episodes, like a bad tragedy; children and savages think everything is like a child or savage; they personify everything. Hence to simpler ages miracles are not miracles: everything alike is the action of a living being: there are no laws. The prophets tell the ancient Jews not to worship trees, not to let the smoke of sacrifice rise from under every green tree, nor to eat forbidden sacrifices in the groves:—it is evident that they can mean differently in ordering trees and sun and moon to praise God than any modern can, who may repeat their words. The prophets warn Israel against returning to the gods of their fathers, sticks and stones: these are the gods of the fathers of all of us,—mistletoe and holly and oak are their best known representatives in England, of which the two first still linger affectionately in connection with the festival of Him who conquered them. "The human mind, alike in Europe and in America, in Africa and in the South Seas, works in the same way, according to the same laws." Confronted by the same problems, at the same level of intelligence, it is everywhere satisfied with the same answers.

It is already frequently known that the Old Testament contains stories, customs, and laws to be found in other than Hebrew records. It is known, to take a few instances, that the flood and tower of Babel are Chaldean stories, that many savage and early religions, such as the Egyptian, forbid the eating of different animals, that gods usually dwell on mountains and speak to their prophets on the summits of them, that great heroes like Moses and Elijah are in all mythologies often taken into the heavens and

expected to return to help their people; that looking at a serpent that does not hurt as a cure for a bite received from another serpent is an instance of that wrong association between analogous things, that leads to the belief that witches can harm a person by injuring a wax image of that person; that to break a looking-glass is to kill someone, whose reflection (which is his soul according to some peoples), has been in that looking-glass; that the tears of children sacrificed to the god of rain will cause plentiful showers of rain, and the dripping of their blood be followed by the dripping of his waters;<sup>1</sup> or that the sun god must be worshipped by a perpetual fire in order that his fire may never cease to benefit the earth—in fact, to early minds a simile is an explanation or a process.

Many who recognise that the Old Testament is not an accurate history still consider the New Testament sacred. Now Christianity, like all religions, did not arise in an instant. It admits itself (if I may use such a phrase) to be founded on older writings and beliefs. Excruciating misuse is made in the gospels of older sentences torn from their proper meanings. The four different gospels which were canonised by Catholic Christians in the second half of the second century<sup>2</sup> do not quite agree with each other. For instance, the place where Joseph and Mary lived before Jesus' birth, the genealogy of Jesus, the details of the resurrection, the day of the crucifixion, differ in their accounts. According to Luke, the Sermon on the Mount took place on a plain.

But I am about to deal here only with the *miracles* of the New Testament.

(I have already said that, to Jesus, miracles did not appear as they do to us. He had not our idea of a system of nature and of a regular order in the universe.<sup>3</sup>)

Owing to the Jewish belief that the Messiah will be descended from David, two different genealogies are given in the New Testament, by which such descent is ascribed to Jesus. But, partly owing to a misunderstood text in Isaiah, Jesus is also said to be the son of a virgin and the son of God. Without worrying about the conflict between these

<sup>1</sup> The original inhabitants of Mexico and all savages who pour out water in some "mystery" performed at festivals occurring at season of rain, argue thus.

<sup>2</sup> Davidson's "Introduction to the New Testament."

<sup>3</sup> See Renan's "Life of Jesus," chapter iii.



statements (for it seems as though he could not be both David's and God's son), let us consider the immaculate conception.<sup>1</sup>

Coablicué was sweeping the great temple of Mexico when she saw the feather of a humming-bird floating in the air; she placed it in her breast, and became pregnant, and gave birth to Huitzilopochtli, the god of war, who was born fully armed, and spoke before his birth.

A Chinese virgin trod on the footprint of a god, and became pregnant. She gave birth to a son, and sat down to take a little rest in a shelter by the side of the road. The oxen and the sheep surrounded her and warmed her with their breath; the birds covered the infant with their wings. So says the Chi-King, written six centuries before Christ. Tsau-Tsang-Po adds: "Having been conceived without the union of the two sexes, and Tien (heaven) having given him life by a miracle, he must have been born without injuring the virginity of his mother." Hin-Tching says: "The ancient saints and divine men were called the sons of heaven, because their mothers became pregnant and gave birth to them through the power of Tien (heaven). Therefore the letter *Sing* is composed of two (signs), one denoting 'virgin,' and the other 'to have children.'"

The mother of Hoang-Ti was surrounded by a celestial light, and the mother of Yao was shone on by a star as she slept, and in these ways each became pregnant. The mother of the founder of the Manchou dynasty was a virgin: a voice from heaven proclaimed her son to be the son of heaven. In Peru the virgins of the sun, when pregnant, said it was by the sun, and were believed, unless there was evidence to the contrary.<sup>2</sup>

Evidently one man is superior to another, because he is born of a higher being and in an unusual and a better way.

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, . . . wise men came from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen *his* star in the east and are come to worship him." And after inquiring for him, behold, "the star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the

<sup>1</sup> My information on this subject is from "Le fils de la Vierge," by H. de Charency.

<sup>2</sup> I believe Buddha also was one (in one of his incarnations) born of a virgin.

young child was." The wise men recognise the star as Jesus' star: it was the star which rose over a particular place at the time when a child was born in that place, or the most important star in the sky that was above his birth; *therefore*, the one event is connected with the other, the fate of the star is the cause of the child's fate. This represents roughly the kind of reasoning on which all astrology is founded. But, as you must remember, the stars are living beings, else why did, and do, men worship them? Origen, the early Christian father, says the stars are animate and rational, moved with such order and reason as it would be absurd to say irrational creatures could fulfil.<sup>1</sup> The Shah of Persia still waits for days outside the walls of his capital till the constellations allow him to enter. Is it not plain to many savage peoples that the little stars fear their cannibal father the sun and flee from him, growing pale as soon as he comes; but their mother the moon takes them to bed in the big hole in the earth as soon as the sun gets up in the morning? Note how God speaks to Job about the stars: "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades? . . . Canst thou bring forth Mazzoroth in his season, or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? . . . Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?"

You may say that the quotations from Job are poetical; but the poetry and the irrational, confused, superstition of one age is a survival from the actual belief and the thought of an earlier age. I am not convinced that the personifications in Job are poetical. The natives of Australia say in prose that the stars in Orion are young men dancing a corroboree, and Job himself protests that he never worshipped the sun or the moon (Job xxxi. 26, 27, 28).

The apologists say that the three wise men are symbolical. The ancient wisdom of the pagan world bows before the cradle of Jesus and gives the gold of pagan power, the frankincense of pagan piety, and the sweet-smelling myrrh of pagan wisdom to his service. But if they were guided by the star of progress they must not stay there. At any rate, allegories introduced into an account of the life of a great and saintly Man would not, without any purpose, be made to contain incidents quite different from the

<sup>1</sup> Tylor's "Primitive Culture," from which I have taken a great quantity of information in this section.

general conceptions of the audience for whom they were intended.

"Then Jesus comes from Galilee to Jordan unto John (the Baptist) to be baptised by him." For John seems to have been a prophet among the sect known as Essenes, whose chief characteristics were that they retired into the wilderness in order to repent, that they purified themselves with constant ceremonial washings, and that they expected the speedy coming of the Messiah, and therefore neglected all worldly affairs and mortified their bodies with abstinence. Certain cleansings are commanded by the law of Moses, and at the time of Jesus "baptism had become a usual ceremony on the reception of proselytes into the bosom of the Jewish religion, a sort of initiatory rite." These ceremonial cleansings as well as baptism of new born infants are found in many parts of the world—for instance in Australia, America, Africa. After confessing sins, the Inca of Peru bathed, and said, "O thou River, receive the sins I have this day confessed unto the Sun; carry them down to the sea and let them never more appear." At birth and before Christian baptism, the Kichak Islanders wash the child and gave it a name.<sup>1</sup> The observant Hindoo washes frequently:—he says on certain occasions, "Take away, O Waters, whatsoever is wicked in me, what I have done by violence or curse or untruth." The Zoroastrian Vendîdâd is full of laws about washings and other kinds of purifications. Finally the Roman Catholic Church has probably actually taken "the holy water mingled with salt, the holy water vessel at the church door," and the brush to sprinkle the worshippers from Greek and Roman temples, where they were needed for the rituals of classic antiquity. So perverse is history, that Jews might be baptised to-day, were it not that Jesus was baptised and Christians after Him.

And when Jesus had come up out of the water, "Lo, the heavens were opened (unto him,<sup>2</sup>) and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." A window was evidently

<sup>1</sup> Billing: "North Russia," p. 175. Quoted in Tylor's "Primitive Culture." Throughout the essay, it will be best to assume that *nothing is original*.

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *unto him*. (Revised Version's translation of St Matthew iii. 16.)

opened in the sky, which is the ceiling of our earth and the floor of the heavenly world above; then a voice was heard coming from the upper storey, from which also a dove descended. The dove is known to have been considered sacred by the Semitic nations round Israel, and therefore this belief was probably known among the Jews as a superstition, somewhat opposed to their religion. I cannot say much about this incident, because I am not sure whether I may assume that the Holy Spirit *entered into* a dove. But as we are mentioning the activity of the Holy Ghost, I should like to mention that among the Tahkalis the priest is accustomed to *lay his hand on the head* of the nearest relative of a deceased person, and to blow into him the soul of the departed one, which is thus supposed to be inherited by his heir. Please compare this with the service for ordaining priests:—"Receive the Holy Ghost (Spirit or Soul) . . . now committed unto thee *by the imposition of our hands*."<sup>1</sup>

If I see something and a savage who is with me cannot see it, he will probably say that I have seen a spirit that is invisible to him: he cannot understand the existence of a delusion, a subjective vision not corresponding to any objective reality. He does not know that parts of the brain and certain nerves are used in seeing, and still less does he understand that the nerves and brain may so act on the eye as to cause it to convey back to the brain a sensation which is partly or entirely hallucinatory, that they may thus cause us to see what has no existence outside ourselves. Hence savages are forced to suppose that dreams are journeys, during which the soul sees what he is dreaming, while the body lies asleep (thus say, to give a few examples, the Karens, the New Zealanders, and Tagals), or else they may be visits from a friendly soul. In dreams we see not only people and animals but things (especially people's clothes); this is one reason why savages suppose things to have souls: it is one reason why they personify everything. And throughout all ages the soul is popularly supposed to resemble the body which it inhabits, but to be less solid, so that it often appears invisible. The conception of a dream as a journey is well illustrated in the following tale:—A certain philosopher explained some passages in Plato to St Augustine, although on a previous occasion he had refused to do so. Afterwards the saint inquired why the philosopher had done what previously he refused

<sup>1</sup> Herbert Spencer's "Principles of Sociology."

to do. "I did not do it," was the reply, "but I dreamt I did."<sup>1</sup> After this somewhat digressive explanation you will be able to understand that the usual education for the profession of medicine man, prophet, or sorcerer among savages is to go into a solitary place, fast, and meditate until spirits appear. The spirits are as real as are the people seen in dreams. With the Dène Hareskins the physician when his services are required "begins by a three days' fast. Then a "magic lodge" . . . is built for him in the forest. Here he falls into the sleep of the shadow (a trance, we should probably call it): he is then able to communicate with the spirit which is "to descend on the sick man," who is now brought before him.<sup>2</sup> The Greenland sorcerers are usually subject to fits, but they enter the profession by fasting and seeing spirits. Indeed, it is natural that delicate and hysterical savages should wish to avoid the ordinary rough life of their fellows, and to make use of any superior power of seeing gods which may distinguish them from common men. Constantly meditating on a few emotional ideas, surrounded perhaps by the mysterious terrors of a jungle which is inhabited by demons who take the shape of animals, cut off from the protection of his tribe and probably exposed to hidden foes, weary in brain and muscle and nerve for want of food, it is not surprising that the prophet sees visions. The Zube sees snakes with huge eyes, stealthily creeping leopards, enemies with assegais, while he kneels and tries to pray in a solitary place. Father Dobrizhaffer (a missionary) says:<sup>3</sup> "It always appeared probable to me that these rogues, from long fasting, contract a weakness of the brain, a giddiness, a kind of delirium, which makes them imagine they are gifted with superior wisdom and give themselves out for magicians." The use of fasting, of intoxicants (including tobacco, wine, and opium) of suffocating fumes, of flagellation, of vigils, of all kinds of wild dancing and screaming, as a means of seeing spiritual beings (or of being "possessed" by them) is found almost throughout the whole history of religion. Jesus went into the wilderness, "with the wild beasts,"<sup>4</sup> *fasted* forty days, and was tempted by the Devil. Buddha also *fasted* seven times seven days under

<sup>1</sup> Augustin, *De Civ.* : Dei xviii. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Petitot, "Traditions Indiennes du Canada Nord," *Ouest*, p. 434, quoted by Lang in "Cock Lane and Common-Sense."

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by Tylor.

<sup>4</sup> St Mark i. 13.

a tree, and was tempted by the evil spirit. The apostles constantly *pray fasting* and then see visions. (Please read the Acts of the Apostles in order to verify this statement.) Moses *fasts* forty days and God talks to him.<sup>1</sup> The Indian Yogi *fasts* (and does other uncomfortable things, I fancy) and his soul becomes more free. St Francis and his companions live on dry bread and water, and pray all night, and never "stay their hunger at a table," and mortify their bodies with fasts and vigils and scourgings, and wear iron girdles on their flesh and shirts of mail, and weep and sigh, and take heed not to offend "our Lady and Madonna, holy poverty": apostles appear to them, they hear voices from heaven, and see angels surrounded by bright splendour, and Jesus Christ himself, or a Seraph with six wings bearing in him the image of Christ crucified.<sup>2</sup>

In the primitive arithmetic of primitive men and of children, the fingers are useful instruments. Savages usually use their toes also; our children cannot do so. To give one example, the Tamanacs on the Orinoco express ten in words as *amgna aceponare*, which means "both hands"; sixteen is literally spoken of as one to the other (or second) foot (*i.e.* both hands and one foot *and* one to the other) and twenty as *tevin itoto* or "one Indian" (with all his toes and fingers). Now, when the counting power of primitive people reaches its utmost limit, the highest known number is used as an indefinite term for a great many. If a man's hands and feet twice over was the limit of counting, forty would mean either forty or a great many. Of course, I am not implying that the Hebrews at periods when we know anything about them, could not count more than forty—this would be absurd; but I mean merely that they had inherited in their language the expression forty, meaning "many." And in the Bible the number forty seems to be so used. "The general framework of numeration," the use of ten or the number of all the fingers, as an arithmetical basis, "stands throughout the world as an abiding monument of primæval culture." These remarks on the number forty are, of course, connected with the forty days' fast of Jesus; but I have forgotten to say anything about the angels of the Lord and the glory of the Lord which shone

<sup>1</sup> I believe that all the Hebrew prophets went into the wilderness, but I cannot stop to look for evidence now. But see the account of Elijah, whose life is narrated.

<sup>2</sup> "The little flowers of St Francis."

round about the shepherds who were keeping watch over their flock on the night of Jesus' birth. When angels appear to Abraham, to Jacob, or to Joshua, they have to say that they are messengers from God,—they look exactly like men. In very early times—and some of the records from which the earlier books of the Bible were composed were probably very old—God and the supernatural are hardly more wonderful than the every-day world. It was not so long at that time since plants and animals gave birth to the human tribes, each of whom worshipped chiefly the divine ram, cow, snake, bird, or reed from which it was descended. Such a divine beast and ancestor is only one among many, and his worshippers chiefly remind him of their relationship to him, in order to retain his favour. But, as I have already indicated, the savage comparatively soon attains some conception of souls (I do not think that any savages have ever been found who are known not to have such a conception): the phenomena of sleep, trance, dreams, visions, shadows, fainting, and narcotic hallucinations suggest to him the idea of a second, internal, self, separable from the more visible outside man:—and must he not soon perceive some conflict between that part of him which is wounded, and gets hungry and sleepy, and that with which he tries hard to escape dangers, to get his food, and with which he hates his enemy and desires his wife? He has at first no conception of death: for does he not see men asleep and yet return to moving life, and he supposes that death is a longer journey of the inner self, and, therefore, he puts the dead who sleep so long in a safe place to which the soul can return. Of this belief, I shall have to say more afterwards; but when once man has a fairly clear idea of souls, the power both of great men, and of gods is increased. The medicine man, freay, jossakeed, biraak, or whatever else we call the sorcerer, can then converse with God, and with the dead, and descend to their abodes,—the body of the sorcerer usually remaining at home.<sup>1</sup> The power of a god can manifest itself apparently at two places at once: the god's soul or some of its souls being away from its body; and the magician induces part of it to dwell in a stone or a staff.<sup>2</sup> Great chiefs and

<sup>1</sup> A. Lang's "Myth, Ritual, and Religion."

<sup>2</sup> It seems to be an error to suppose that so-called "fetichism" (worship of uncarved stones or dead objects) is necessarily lower than worship of "idols" or carved images.

magicians as well as gods can appear as beasts or as men. The politics of the gods is always much like that of men : in small tribes, where each man acknowledges the chief, but in most respects is free of all law, the gods also are separate chiefs to be propitiated but not much needed in ordinary affairs ; when some men accumulate property, there is an aristocracy of wealth among the gods also ; when chiefs are subordinated in a feudal system, there are vassals and war lords in heaven. Just as the head of a tribe is less distant from his subordinates than a modern European monarch, and yet also possessed of mysterious powers such as we should call supernatural, which account for his birthright of eminence, and which none of our unromantic sovereigns claim, so too are the early gods less haughty and less surrounded by a celestial etiquette, and yet also more willing to give simple but startling and homely examples of their power and skill, such as God refrains from displaying to an experimental age. In Genesis, God plants a garden and walks in it—a garden of God in the midst of a thirsty land. His angels are men or like men in appearance. Satan, in the Old Testament, is a servant of God, used to tempt and to try by affliction :—he is also an inspector and an official witness. After almost a thousand years, even the heavens look older. Angels wear new liveries : they have four faces, like those of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle, and they have four wings,—they are bright as fire, like amber and like jewels ; they are like the bright colours in a brilliant sky.<sup>1</sup> Or they wear such shiny garments, or are surrounded by such light, that no one can mistake them. The devil, too, is become master of Hell : we hear of wailing and gnashing of teeth and furnaces of fire in connection with him.

In Persia Auharmazd and Aharman agreed to decide which was the stronger in the course of a 9000 years' fight. Now Auharmazd was omniscient and good. For three thousand years he worked his will and created a paradise-like world. Then came Aharman and his servants the demons and created noxious creatures and noxious plants and avarice, hunger, pain, want, disease, lust, lethargy ; for ninety days and nights the heavenly angels fought with the army of demons and hurled them into Hell, which is in the

<sup>1</sup> Ezekiel i. The Lucifer of Isaiah xiv. is a rival god, the morning star ; he and the nation whom he protected shall be destroyed.



middle of the earth, and built the rampart of the sky, so that they cannot invade heaven; but the demons succeeded in reaching earth, and when the first man and woman had sinned several times, demons shouted: "You are man; worship the demons." And the demons dwell in men,—demons of ruin, of pain, of age, producers of vexation and bile, revivers of grief, the progeny of gloom, bringers of stench, decay and vileness, and many others, "very numerous and very notorious." And some of Hell is very cold and some very hot: and the food there is *brimstone*, and of succulents the lizard. But in the end, after three thousand years in which good and evil mingle, the day shall come when Auharmazd shall conquer. Then those who are dead will return to life; nor is this so difficult as the original creation, when by me (says Auharmazd) "legs were created for the water, so that it flows away"; for at the time of resurrection I shall demand the bones from the spirit of earth, the blood from the water, the hair from the plants, and life from fire. Men will be judged and the evil punished for a short time; the demons will be destroyed and hell purified and added to earth; the world will be made mountainless and iceless, immortal and everlasting.<sup>1</sup> In ancient Persia, as in the New Testament, God (Aûharmazd, Auhura-Mazda or Ormuzd) and his angels are light and creatures of brightness, while the Devil (Aharman, Aura-Mainyu, or Ahriman) and his demons are Princes of Darkness and creatures of dark. Ahriman, is the cause of all evil: "that which was the wish of Ahriman, and I ought not to have thought and yet have thought, what I ought not to have spoken and yet have spoken, what I ought not to have done and yet have done; of these sins repent I with thoughts, words, and works, bodily as well as spiritual, earthly as well as heavenly, with the three words, Pardon, Lord, I repent."<sup>2</sup> Thus does the Zoroastrian speak of his sins.

My only excuse for giving so much space to this matter is that these Persian ideas somehow seem familiar to us, and yet they are certainly not found in any earlier Hebrew writings, as we shall see in considering the immortality of the soul. The Jews, of course, came into contact with Persia.

<sup>1</sup> See Pahlavi Texts translated by E. W. West (Max Müller's series of Sacred Books of the East.)

<sup>2</sup> See Zend - Avesta, translated by Spiegel (M. Müller's Sacred Books.)

The Khands of Orissa (and other peoples) make the Sun God good and creator of a perfect world, and his wife, the Earth Goddess, rebellious and bringer of disease, poison, and disorder; sowing seeds of wickedness which led to a harvest of death, punishment, fierce, and noxious animals and plants.<sup>1</sup>

What the devil looked like when he appeared to Jesus, I really cannot tell you. As the imitation of all natural objects was held to be sinful by the Jews, they must fairly easily have changed their conceptions of the outward appearances of these diabolical or heavenly beings. They were inclined to give them forms borrowed from their neighbours, and particularly borrowed from their cousins and brothers, the neighbouring Semitic peoples. It is clear that at about A.D. 26<sup>2</sup> the devil could not have had the horns, the hairy legs, and the hoofs with which we see him. It was not until the ancient gods had been conquered by Jesus that he obtained this form from Pan. It was after the gods of Greece and Italy and Ireland and Scandinavia had gone into exile; at the time when the divine Venus, made wicked by her degradation and sufferings, became the Frau Venus of the Venusberg; when Apollo and Bacchus and Mercury had to go into a monastery and creep out at night and hire a fisherman to ferry them over to the Island of the Dead, when they wished to again enjoy themselves for a little while;<sup>3</sup> when all kinds of desperate gods were glad to get a living by serving the Devil and appearing at his wild hunts and blasphemous sabbaths; or more innocently joined the gentle fairies, elves, and water-spirits that still lived in the elements or plants of which they were the life. At this time it must have been that Pan, too, fled from the pale and bleeding Jew—the Jew with dark eyes that stared and could scarcely see, the skin of whose bloodless face was stretched tightly over the bony framework; his bent back bore the cross, and his thin body drooped with pain and weariness—the strong gods were frightened, and the laughing gods became silent—and the wild god Pan, who had lived in forests; the god who no doubt had once been a goat, or a fertilising tree spirit, living in the shape of a goat, but had changed his form

<sup>1</sup> I tell the tale as I found it; but it looks as though they had been influenced by higher teaching—perhaps from missionaries.

<sup>2</sup> See the "Authorised Version of the Bible in English."

<sup>3</sup> See Heine's brilliant essay, "Die Grötter in Exil."

and character as he grew older and his worshippers rose to a higher degree of culture—for men do not like to knowingly suffer their gods to be inferior to themselves—the gamboling goat god who loved to play with the nymphs and dance with them, the nimble goat tourist god who climbed mountains and rocks and enjoyed the beauties of Nature, the wild lover of scenic splendour and the solitary quiet tree dreamer who played the flute, the god whom all the gods loved because he loved all that was fresh and strong and green and healthy—he it was who was damned beyond all and degraded to a horrible supremacy.

He was evidently very strong. He began life as a goat, not, of course, because his worshippers were on a level with goats, but because they supposed the goat (and other animals) to be possessed of great powers; he made trees grow and buds open. Later, he kept his soul more and more in human form, retaining only the agile legs which suited his taste for wild scenery. But when his name and worship spread over most parts of Greece, and it was necessary to discover in what way he was connected with the other gods, it was still fancied that his father Hermes might have visited his mother in the shape of a ram. The victorious Jesus was unable to kill him, but he was outlawed and declared to be a devil, offensive to the reigning Holy Family. Mediæval saints and visionaries called him "The Devil" when they saw him.

Do not despair, however, because of his power, for it has greatly decreased. Once, evil spirits were the causes of all diseases, and this exemplifies what I said before—that once everything was alive or caused by a living creature. By a devil man was "tossed and shaken" in fever, "pained and wrenched" as the creature tore and twisted within him; it threw him "helpless on the ground," it jerked and writhed him in convulsions, it made him "leap upon the bystanders with a giant's strength and a wild beast's ferocity," it impelled him, "with distorted face and frantic gesture and voice not his own, nor seemingly even human, to pour forth wild incoherent ravings, or with thought and eloquence beyond his sober faculties to command, to counsel, to foretell." It caused his limbs to tremble without exercise of his own soul, or it held them fast in paralysis contrary to the commands of his spirit. It enabled him to see what mere human beings cannot see, or it covered the eyes of his soul and made him blind. It

made him speak strangely and act wildly at times when he knew nothing, his own soul being absent or overcome (its actions are most clearly seen in diseases in which we are beyond our own control or acting without ordinary complete consciousness). On hearing what it had done and made him do, the poor, tired man, returning to ordinary life, often imagined "a personal name for it, which it can declare when it speaks in its own voice and character through his organs of speech." It distends, it pushes, it compresses, it twists, it knots, it eats, it hammers his stomach, his chest, his head, his limbs, or his intestines. In Tasmania a demon consumes the liver; in *Mintira* (Malay) it causes inflammations and swellings; in parts of India it dwells in his bowels, tearing and shutting them; in New Zealand it is usually a malicious ghost of an infant; in Samoa and other places it is usually a ghost seeking revenge on one who injured it or on the relatives of such an one. In a few cases, especially when it causes sexual impulses, it appeared to be of a kind disposition.<sup>1</sup> In parts of North America it was the ghost of an animal, whose corpse had been treated with disrespect. The Rev. J. L. Wilson says of Guinea:—

"Demoniacal possessions are common, and the feats performed by those who are supposed to be under such influence are certainly not unlike those described in the New Testament. Frantic gestures, convulsions, foaming at the mouth, feats of supernatural strength, furious ravings, bodily lacerations, gnashing of teeth . . . may be witnessed in most of the cases."

A man near a village of heathen Pwo (in Burmah) fell down in an epileptic fit, and his familiar spirit forbade the people to listen to Dr Mason, a missionary. Afterwards, when he had been converted to Christianity, he said "he could not account for his former exercises, but it certainly appeared to him as though a spirit spoke and he must tell what was communicated."<sup>2</sup>

As men grow more critical the world is less ruled by incoherent impulses, and becomes more artistic, harmonious, and united. Consequently devils only cause the more unusual and mysterious diseases: the others depend on

<sup>1</sup> At certain Greek and Oriental temples, prostitutes were connected with the ritual. My description of devilish deeds is mainly adapted from Tylor.

<sup>2</sup> Masson's "Burmah," quoted by Tylor.

the state of the body. Jesus healed the ignorant and foreigners, he had few dealings with the more educated classes, the Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees. "Epilepsy, mental and nervous diseases, in which the patient seems no longer to belong to himself, and infirmities the cause of which is not outwardly apparent, like deafness and dumbness,"<sup>1</sup> were at that time explained (at anyrate by the more ignorant) as due to demons.

Now, just as Jesus by the strength of his spirit drove away disease demons, so did his disciples, hallowed by contact with him acquire the same power (St Matthew x.). Other healers, seeing the reputation which Jesus acquired, used his name in their conjurations of devils: and Jesus did not protest "for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me" (St Mark ix. 38, 39). It appears from the gospels, that the casting out of devils could be done by taking in Beelzebub as a lodger, by "having him" inside you as well as your own soul, and so being for a time endowed with his power (St Mark iii. 22), and that the secrets of the art were purchasable (or supposed to be purchasable) for money. Jesus, like ourselves perhaps, was living in a time of change,—a time when great misfortunes and the rule of foreigners had unsettled men's minds; the God of their fathers seemed to have forsaken Israel, and the stranger had brought strange demon gods into the land; despair and religious excitement had caused a large number of people to become mad, though in many cases, as "at the present day in Syria," where people who are only somewhat eccentric are looked upon as mad or possessed by a demon (these two ideas being expressed by the same word—*medjnoun*) their disorders were in reality very slight.<sup>2</sup> The physician was becoming separated from the priest: but it was still largely supposed that prayer, exorcism, and faith were the best cures. In "Ecclesiasticus" (an apochryphal book by a Jew supposed to have been written about 100 B.C.) we read—

"My son, in thy sickness be not negligent: but pray unto the Lord, and he will make thee whole. Leave off from sin, and order thine hands aright, and cleanse thy heart from all wickedness: give a sweet savour and a memorial

<sup>1</sup> Renan's "Life of Jesus."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. xvi.

of fine flour and make a fat offering as not being.<sup>1</sup> Then give place to the physician, for the Lord hath created him ; let him not go from thee, for thou hast need of him " (xxxviii. 9-12). In far earlier days it is noted with decided disapproval that King Asa (who was not entirely pious) "in his disease sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians." In the Talmud we learn that a rabbi may cure by laying on of hands ; but at the same time some diseases are ascribed to physical causes. I believe that the priests of the Greek and Roman Churches have similar powers to this day : they have services for cure by exorcism,—however, the Lateran Council (1139), the Council of Reims (1131), and again the Lateran Council (1215), ordered priests not to practise medicine, as it interfered with their religious duties. Numerous examples of the driving out of demons by conjuration or by blows will be found in Justin, Tertullian, Chrysostom, Cyril, Minucius, Cyrian, and other early Christian Fathers.

In 1862 Mgr. Anouilh, a French missionary bishop in China, vexed the devil by his success in converting the natives. "During the fifteen days in which I have been preaching," he says, "there have been five or six possessions. Our catchumens *drove out* the devil with holy water, and cured the sick. I have seen marvellous things. The devil has been a great help to me in converting the pagans. As at the time of our Saviour, although father of lies, he has not been able to prevent himself from telling the truth. See the poor possessed man, making a thousand contortions and crying out loudly, 'Why do you preach the true religion? I will not suffer you to take away my disciples.' What is your name? the catechist demanded. After refusing an answer several times, 'I have been sent by Lucifer.' How many are you? 'We are twenty-two.' The blessed water and the sign of the cross delivered the possessed man."<sup>2</sup>

In order not to seem biassed in favour of the powers possessed by the Roman form of Christianity, I will briefly mention the miraculous healing performed by George Fox, the persecuted Quaker. "Now after I was set at liberty from Nottingham gaol (where I had been kept a prisoner a

<sup>1</sup> Or "as a dead man."

<sup>2</sup> Gaume, "L'eau benite au dix-neuvième siècle," 3rd ed. p. 353, quoted by Tylor.

pretty long time) I travelled as before in the work of the Lord. And coming to Mansfield Woodhouse, there was a distracted woman, under a doctor's hand, with her hair let loose all about her ears; and he was about to let her blood, she being fast bound, and many people being about her, holding her by violence; but he could get no blood from her. And I desired them to unbind her and let her alone; for they could not touch the spirit in her by which she was tormented. So they did unbind her, and I was moved to speak to her, and in the name of the Lord to bid her be quiet and still. And she was so. And the Lord's power settled her mind and she mended; and afterwards received the truth and continued in it to her death." Thus says Fox in his autobiography.

Now let us consider the methods of healing employed by Jesus. First of all there are cases in which, as with the leper who followed him when he came down from the mountain, "he put forth his hand and touched the patient," saying, "I will; be thou clean" (St Matthew viii. 3). Then also there were cases like that of the blind man, when, "he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay" and told him to "wash in the pool of Siloam" (St John ix. 6). In order to understand these cures, we have to obtain an idea of the principles of holiness, of "clean and unclean" things, as they are termed in the Old Testament, or of "taboo," as we term the same institution when we find it in savage lands. As I have before explained, a great chief, a god, or a magician, are all possessed of powers that we should call supernatural. It is the business of a king in some countries to cause the sun to shine and the rain to fall. The Emperor of China apologises to his people when the weather is very bad for the land. Now, such powerful creatures, though they can be useful, are naturally usually regarded with dread. Their sanctity or power is infectious. Whatever they possess has some of their own powers, is almost part of themselves.

You remember how pathetic the fate of Pan was:—how he was once the best loved of the gods, became the worst of the evil powers. The poor unclean animals have suffered in the same manner:—once they were gods, or sacred representatives of gods, the subjects of great kings, each of whom was pleased at honours shown to his people; but when Yahweh, the Lord of Hosts, gradually became the

guardian of Israel (and later the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ), He gradually made the sacred animals unclean: they were too strong to be made common clean animals, —so they retained the privileges of being neither eaten nor touched; their infectious and dreadful power could not be taken from them—it contaminated everything with which they came into contact, and all such things had to be cleansed, purified, or destroyed in exactly the same way as all things had to be cleansed, purified, or destroyed that came into contact with the altar, sacrifices, or holier parts of the temple and other property of God. There were degrees of sanctity and uncleanness. Not all the “unclean” animals do seem to us particularly unclean. Thus the swan and the stork are declared unclean; locusts, beetles, and grasshoppers are clean, while all other insects are unclean; all carnivorous animals are unclean (they neither divide the hoof nor chew the cud)—but these animals are not particularly filthy in their habits, though usually “bad” eating—but they are the animals which had been most worshipped by the hunter, by men who did not yet practise agriculture, and in religious matters people do what their fathers did. Primitive man propitiates most the harmful powers, because the others seem kind-hearted. “The Esthonians, peasants in the time of Oesel, stand in great awe of the weevil, an insect which is exceedingly destructive to the grain”:—they say, “the more we hurt him, the more he hurts us.” “Some even put a (dead) weevil under a stone in the field and offer corn to it.” The crocodile is in many places sacred, because it is dangerous and useless: why, then, commence a “blood-feud” with crocodiles, by killing one of them, and so forcing all its relatives to exact vengeance from men? In the East Indian island of Bali, the mice which ravage the rice-fields are caught in great numbers, and burned in the same way that (human) corpses are burned. But to propitiate the mice or the kings of the mice, “two of the captured mice are allowed to live, and receive a little packet of white linen,”—a gift intended as a sign of homage, like gifts ceremoniously offered to chiefs or kings. “Then the people bow down before them as before gods and let them go.”<sup>1</sup> Thus by the Semites also vermin and mice and such unpleasant (and really to our minds “unclean”) animals were feared (Leviticus xi.). “Take off

<sup>1</sup> Frazer.



your shoes," cried Joshua's angel, "for you stand on holy ground." The angel, as God's messenger,<sup>1</sup> or God or some other powerful being, had imparted by contact powers to the ground which the shoes also might "catch" (as we say); therefore the shoes should not be allowed to touch the ground, if they are to be used afterwards in ordinary life. The Arab used to enter some holy places naked, or give clothes worn in them to the priests. The priests of Israel wore holy garments and washed when they went into the tabernacle (or later the Temple); *when they came out they again washed* in order not to carry away any infectious holy power. The "most holy" parts of the sacrifices were eaten by Aaron and his son alone. When God was on Sinai, the whole mountain was strictly "tabooed."

The Mikado or Dairai of Japan, as the incarnation of the Sun Goddess, is surrounded by restrictions, as some chance act of his might set forces into action that would upset the earth. His crown sits on the throne some hours every day, in order that by its immobility it may preserve peace and tranquillity in his empire.<sup>2</sup> "At the great religious metropolis of Hierapolis" (Syria) "pigs were neither sacrificed nor eaten, and if a man touched a pig he was unclean for the rest of the day." Some people said this was because pigs were unclean; others said it was because pigs were sacred.<sup>3</sup> The ancient Egyptians purified themselves if they touched a pig; to drink pig's milk was believed to cause leprosy; but once a year they sacrificed a pig to Osiris, and ate the flesh sacramentally, though they would neither eat the flesh nor sacrifice it on any other day. In the island of Webar (between New Guinea and Celebes) people are descended from pigs, serpents, crocodiles, turtles, dogs and eels;<sup>4</sup> a man may not eat the sacred animal from which he is descended; if he does so, he will become a leper or go mad. If one of the men in Samoa, whose god is an eel, eats an eel, he becomes very ill, and the god dwelling in his stomach says: "I am killing this man, he

<sup>1</sup> In Hebrew angel and messenger are expressed by the same word.

<sup>2</sup> Kämpfer, "History of Japan," quoted in Frazer's "Golden Bough." Please note that the details were described two hundred years ago.

<sup>3</sup> Lucian, "De-dea Syria" 54, quoted by Frazer.

<sup>4</sup> Every one of these animals is "unclean" in the Bible, or to the modern "orthodox" Jew.

ate my incarnation.”<sup>1</sup> In Tonga if a man touches a sacred chief, he washes to purify himself: if he did not perform the purifying ceremonies before he again touched food, he would swell up and die, or at least be afflicted with scrofula or other disease. Men know that some animals are powerful, before they are sure whether they are benevolent or malicious, sacred or unclean. The power of the unclean animals was never forgotten by the Jews in ancient Palestine. When their country was in terrible distress, and God seemed to have grown tired of them, or to have forsaken them or to have cast them off, they sacrificed mice and swine and vermin and other “unclean” or sacred animals; the prophets rebuke them for it. Now we shall find later on, in considering the Communion and Sacrifices, that originally the victim sacrificed to the god was of the same race as the god to whom it was sacrificed:—the mouse was offered to the mouse god or king of the mice, the swine to the god who lived in swine, the vermin to the god whose power was exhibited in vermin. Because the victim was related both to the god and to the worshipper, its blood, when placed on both of them, re-established the bond of union between them. (You cannot understand this yet, perhaps, but I hope you will later.) The altar and all the instruments of sacrifice and the priests were sprinkled with the blood of certain sacrifices and anointed with oil; the blood and oil, parts of God’s relations, attracted him to become connected with and to renew the sanctity or holy power of these objects. Now let us look at Leviticus xiv.—the sacrifice of cleansing a leper. A bird was killed over running water and part of its blood was sprinkled on a man who had had leprosy. The rest of its blood was sprinkled on cedar, scarlet, and hyssop and on a living bird. In this way a connection was established between the man who had been ill, and, on the other hand with certain holy things and a bird:—one blood (or life) was on them all:—and because they all three possessed this in common, the bird, when it flew away, *took away* with it the man’s sickness, while the man took away the beneficent properties of the holy things. Similarly, in cleansing a leprous house, a bird was made to fly away with the leprosy (Lev. xiv. 53). If you touch something which belongs to a great chief, among the Polynesians, or a pig which is reserved for a great feast (all feasts are holy, because the

<sup>1</sup> Turner, “Samoa,” pp. 17 sq. 50 sq., quoted by Frazer.

animals eaten are "sacrificial,"—"devoted" to a god) you are liable to the severest penalties, often death. The chief or some other power has made the animal or thing impregnated or possessed by virtues or forces which you might convey to others and so injure them. You must suffer in order that they may not be in danger of the unknown.<sup>1</sup> With the Jews childbirth was once due to god<sup>2</sup>, and later it made the woman "unclean."

Most peoples associate death with the act of a supernatural power, and mourners and others who come into contact with the dead and with the supernatural force are strictly tabooed and usually shut up. Girls at puberty and women at menstruation are also secluded; it would not be safe for them to *touch the earth* or *see the sun*, lest they should injure them by a violent discharge of their powers, or by a too vigorous absorption of the vital forces dwelling in the earth and sun. With the Jews mourners and such women were "unclean." (See Frazer's "Golden Bough," chap. iv., for exact details as to regulations in different parts of the world.)

Now, Jesus was a holy man. In some cases, then, Jesus touched his patients, either directly or indirectly, and so communicated to them such holy power that they themselves drove away the disease demon. "Virtue went out of Jesus." Jesus' spittle would, of course, be in the highest degree taboo or holy: we learn that it had the power of inhabiting clay, just as medicine men in many places can make for themselves, and enter into, a tiger's body. Observe how powerful Moses' staff was. Curiously enough, the modern Chinese priest "squirts water from his mouth" on to the patient, and on to the mock money and the paper image of the patient, which are offered as a sacrifice to the god who causes the disease. Here, as in the leprosy cleansing, a connection is established between the patient and his image by means of holy water. Since, then, both image and man have been made of one nature, the god is asked to substitute the image for the man and the mock money is added as a premium. The image itself has replaced a living substitute, just as the mock money has

<sup>1</sup> Robertson Smith: "Lectures on the Religion of the Semites." Also remarks on Taboo in E. S. Hartland's "Folk-lore: what is it and what is the good of it?"

<sup>2</sup> In ancient Europe it was associated with tree gods, who attended to all fertility.

replaced real money; as the world gets older its piety decreases and grows frugal.

All things are holy or unclean that once were inhabited or touched by, or in connection with, or belonging to, an extraordinary power. Now water, particularly "living" water (now called running water), was once in many places a spirit or god. In other lakes and rivers gods or spirits sometimes lived; in many waters they occasionally bathed. All such waters became infected with sacredness. The well Zam-Zam, at Mecca, was sacred;<sup>1</sup> the rivers Belus and Adonis, and Asclepius near Sidon; the Ganges and others in India. Some prophets healed by using the sacred Jordan.<sup>2</sup> Jesus, as we have heard, recommended the pool of Siloam. And "a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered," used the pool Bethesda—which pool was perhaps made holy by the stirring of an angel—some of the authorities, however, omit to state this, and so, perhaps, the pool had really contracted a more permanent holiness.<sup>3</sup> In any case, these waters had become "charged" with infectious and curative holiness.

Now there are other cases in which Jesus heals by commanding "as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee," and in others he merely commanded the devils to go or the sick man to be well. In these cases we must suppose that God had put forth his hand or cast his arrows and injured the sick man in order to test his loyalty or to punish him; and seeing that the sick man was loyal and *believed* in the powers of God's representative, or had prayed, God pardoned his sins and took away the punishment, or was satisfied with the results of the test and therefore ended it. In those days it was largely or principally the wicked who were ill—when God had sufficiently punished them he forgave them, and, of course, made them well. I do not think that, at the present day, suffering makes people more useful or more eager to be useful. It distracts the attention, and, if long continued, destroys all power of thinking or imagining, so that the sufferer cannot sympathise and consider what deeds and consequences of deeds, will help or harm the minds and bodies of others—it makes him eager in moments of relief

<sup>1</sup> I think it still is.

<sup>2</sup> Please see especially 2 King v. 1-14.

<sup>3</sup> St John v. 3. Some authorities omit the verse 4 of the authorised translation.

for desperate, unrestrained pleasures. And, nowadays, a man is often ill "through no fault of his own."

In cases where demons caused the disease Jesus employed exorcism as the means of cure. In Babylon and Assyria, in Greece and Italy, there were also exorcists. It seems as though Jesus was not strong enough to command *the* devil to go away when he came to tempt him in the wilderness, but smaller devils were afraid of him. In West Africa diseases are sent away from men into fowls. In the country of Gadara Jesus sends demons into swine. Gadara was a Grecian city, and I hope, therefore, that when the swine rushed down into the sea the owners of the swine were compensated for their loss.<sup>1</sup> The pigs rushed down and "were choked in the sea."<sup>2</sup> It is often said that all pigs can swim and are not drowned in the water, but that it cuts their throats and chokes them. I have never experimented with them.

Once or twice Jesus also raised people from the dead. In these cases he either ordered the people to live (as when he said, with a loud voice "Lazarus, come forth"<sup>3</sup>), or touched them, as when he took Jairus' daughter by the hand.<sup>4</sup> I have already considered the latter method of cure: it seems to imply that the soul of Jairus' daughter was still inside her though no doubt quite ready to leave her. Now sickness (as well as death) is in many places caused by the absence of the soul, or of one of the souls, for many peoples have believed in several souls, just as Christians speak of soul, mind, and spirit. When a man is very ill in Uea (one of the Loyalty Islands) it is because a dead person has lured away the soul of the sick man. The living, therefore, go to the churchyard and whistle and play the flute. The soul that belongs to the sick man is attracted by the music; they lead it to its home, and *in a loud voice command* it to re-enter the sick man's body. The native "wee" (prophet) of the Karen district of Burmah can see souls or spirits and *command* them to return to their bodies, so as to raise the dead. The "keebèt" (prophets) of the Alipones can handle poisonous snakes uninjured (like the Apostles), call up the dead, and also put on the form of tigers.

But these raisings from the dead are really single cases of resurrection, which is itself a special form of transmigra-

<sup>1</sup> Huxley's "Science and Christian Tradition."

<sup>2</sup> St Mark v. 13.

<sup>3</sup> St John xi. 43.

<sup>4</sup> St Mark ix. 25.

tion of souls—a transmigration in which the soul comes back to its own body—and I shall have to consider all these matters as well as immortality in connection with Jesus' resurrection of himself. [There is, I think, only one record in the Bible of the migration of an animal's soul into a man. It is in Daniel iv.: notice especially verse 16:—"Let his heart" (the Hebrew word for "heart" means "soul" also) "be changed from a man's, and let a beast's heart" (or soul) "be given to him." Elijah and Elisha each raised one person from the dead. (1 Kings xvii., 17, etc., and 2 Kings iv. 20, etc.)]

Once when Jesus was in a ship a great tempest arose, so that "the ship was covered with the waves"; Jesus "rebuked the wind and the sea and there was a great calm." And again, some time afterwards, he saw a fig-tree and he was hungry; but on the fig-tree there was no fruit: he said to it: "Let no fruit grow on you hereafter for ever."<sup>1</sup> And the fig-tree withered. The disciples were surprised, but Jesus said to them: If you have faith and do not doubt, you shall not only do this to a fig-tree, but if you say to this mountain, Be removed and cast into the sea, it shall be done; and all things that you may ask for in prayer, believing, you shall receive. It says that Jesus *rebuked* the wind and the sea, and he *said to* the fig-tree. I am inclined to suppose, therefore, that the winds and the waves, or the spirits living in them, or the demon that disturbed them, heard and obeyed him, and, similarly, that the spirit of fertility that ruled over fig-trees, or the soul (spirit) of that particular fig-tree also heard him and left the tree. In the same way, "when the Guaycuras are threatened by a severe storm the men go out armed and the women and children scream their loudest to intimidate the demon."<sup>2</sup> Besides, the disciples in the ship said: "What manner of man is this that even the winds and the sea *obey* him?"

There is, however, another way in which Jesus might have performed these miracles, and it is a method employed by his disciples. "These signs," says Jesus after his resurrection, "shall follow them that believe. *In my name* shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues"; (like the early Mormons) "they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they

<sup>1</sup> St Matthew viii. 26 and xxi. 19, and St Luke xi. 13, etc.

<sup>2</sup> "Histoire de Paraguay," quoted by Frazer.

shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover" (St Mark xvi. 17). Again the seventy disciples once returned to Jesus and said: "Even the devils are subject to us, *through your name*"<sup>1</sup> (St Luke x. 17).

To understand the power of this name we must remember that to primitive man words are not symbols, they are beings; they are personified; he feels that a word is something and therefore it must (to his mind) have an independent existence. Nor are we old enough to laugh at this; for many people cannot understand that words (such as "will" or "conscience") may express what has no entity — that they may be symbols expressing abstract qualities or functions, and may be derived by comparison and generalisation; that they are not necessarily the ghostly representatives of solid individualities; they feel that the word expresses something and therefore there must be some real thing that it expresses. Plato (perhaps one of the greatest of men) is often deluded thus, and by the comparatively undeveloped condition of the Greek language.

Now savages are very careful with the hair and pieces of nails that they cut off themselves. These things have been in connection with themselves, with their life, part of themselves is in them, and if a sorcerer should injure these severed fragments the rest of their bodies would also suffer. (Besides, at the time of the resurrection they often expect that a man will have to gather together all that ever was in him. I am glad to say that this theory seems to me to be full of difficulties, for I, like most in these parts, have been very careless with my cast-off hairs. But in Chili, Turkey, Central Africa, and Peru, people are more prudent.) But more intimately connected with a man's central life than these outermost parts is that which distinguishes him from all other people, that which goes about with him like his shadow (or soul)—I mean his name. The name becomes imbued with a man's character, his powers, and qualities. "Australians and West Africans, Guiana and Red Indians, are alike unwilling to tell their real names, lest thereby they put themselves in the power of a sorcerer. . . . Among the Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia a man may pawn

<sup>1</sup> It is true that "in my name" might mean "to increase my fame" (I do not think that it does); but "*through your name*" can only mean (so far as I can understand it) what I explain it to mean.

his name," go without one for a time, or use a false name, and then redeem it by blankets.<sup>1</sup>

"In one of the despatches intercepted during our war with Nepaul, Ganee Sah sent orders to 'find out *the name* of the Commander of the British Army; write it upon a piece of paper; take it and some rice and turmeric, say the great incantation three times; having said it, send for some plum-tree wood and therewith burn it.'" Here the name is burned in the proper way, and therefore the owner of the name is injured. "All the world over, we find more or less confusion between a thing or a person and its or his name." The Chinooks of Columbia "are averse to telling their true names to strangers; with them the name assumes a personality; it is the shadow or spirit, or other self, of the flesh and blood person, and between the name and the individual there is a mysterious connection, and injury cannot be done to one without affecting the other; therefore to give one's name to a friend is a high mark of Chinook favour." The name of the tutelar deity of Rome was a profound secret; Valerius Socanus is said to have been put to death for revealing it.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, it seems to me that the name is the very essence or soul of a man. In Amboina a doctor goes past a house and says: "Who's there?" If there is a fool in the house who answers, the doctor imprisons the soul in a clod of earth, puts the clod under the sick man's pillow, and performs ceremonies to induce the new soul to enter the sick man, who has lost his own soul.

In one place a man will not utter his own name; in another husband and wife will not utter each other's names, or son and daughter-in-law will not mention the name of father and mother-in-law, or *vice versa*; or names of chiefs, of supernatural beings, of supernaturally powerful animals, of the dead (or ghosts) are not mentioned. The name of Brahma in India is only uttered on solemn occasions. "Talk of the devil and he is sure to appear" was once meant literally; the presence of such a powerful being cannot be separated from the mere thought or idea of him: it is, in fact, another confusion between subjective and objective, such as that displayed by primitive conceptions of visions.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Edward Clodd (in a short newspaper article).

<sup>2</sup> Pliny, Book III. chap. ix. This last paragraph is derived from Sir J. Lubbock's "Origin of Civilisation."

<sup>3</sup> Tylor's "Early History of Mankind."



There are two ways, then, in which words have a religious force. Firstly, as all words are beings, certain words or combinations of words are powerful beings that always perform certain acts. Such combinations of words are usually termed charms,<sup>1</sup> or incantations:—they usually differ from prayers therein, that if they are rightly applied they *must* produce certain effects. As probably the majority of men pray in sacred languages that they do not quite understand (Latin, Hebrew, *ancient* forms of Indian dialects, etc.), they presumably think that their prayers are more or less charms.

Secondly, if a man's name contains so much of the man, how holy and powerful must be the name of a holy and powerful being, how carefully must its mysterious forces be used. Zurathustra asks Ahma-Mazda for his greatest, best, most effective, fairest, most tried, best healing, most destructive of the malice of Dawas and men, most protective, most serviceable name. Ahma-Mazda gives him two long lists of names.<sup>2</sup> The twentieth version of these names is, "I am who I am." God told Moses the same name on one occasion. "The name of God was only pronounced (by the Jews) on one day in the year by one person, and that was by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement, at the most solemn moments of the sacred ritual." (We shall hear more of this afterwards.) God alone is proper to his name, and his name alone is proper to him, say the Rabbis: us also, they add, has he called by his name (for in the word Israel the letters of God's (Hebrew) name are included). After the destruction of the temple Israel was scattered to the four corners of the earth, and there was no longer a temple, a high priest, or an atonement sacrifice, in conjunction with which the name of the Lord might be uttered; God's name, God, and Israel are all divided, injured, till the Lord restores his people to their land, and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem are "pleasing to him as in days of old, as in former times." The name of the Lord is written in the Hebrew writings (YaHVeH, of which the vowels cannot be determined with certainty), but in reading or speaking, "instead of

<sup>1</sup> The word "charm" is sometimes used to mean a "fetish" or powerful inanimate and uncarved thing.

<sup>2</sup> Ormuzd Yast in the "Zend Avesta," translated by J. Darmstetter. (Müller: Sacred Books, etc.)

uttering it," Jews say Adonai, which means Lord, or master. Most Old Testament angels refuse to reveal their names.

But Jesus being a very holy and powerful man, his name also was very useful, holy, and powerful, as we have seen.

Such expressions as "in the name of the Father," etc., or "for thy name's sake" (a common expression in the Old Testament), really imply that the name is powerful and almost identical with the person to whom it belongs. "My name shall be there" means little more than "I shall be there."<sup>1</sup> I believe all rituals will supply similar instances.

"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God; and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," so says the Gospel according to St John. I am glad to say I am not engaged in trying to explain the metaphors and philosophy of the author of that book; I am a humble observer of miracles. But faintly I perceive an idea (or something like an idea) in it. The Word first existed unspoken in the Mind (of God); then the word became a Word, a spoken sound; and by the power of the Word "all things were made"; the word presumably still existing (just as a man can use his name more than once), and afterwards becoming flesh. Please excuse me if I am talking nonsense; but perhaps what I have said about words and names will help you to understand what I myself am not clever enough to understand.

Jesus once walked on the sea (St Matthew xiv. 25). A better miracle than this and in the same style was that performed by Elisha, when a man let an axe fall into the river. And the man of God said: "Where fell it?" And he showed him the place.<sup>2</sup> And he cut down a stick and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim. Therefore said he: "Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand and took it" (2 Kings vi. 5-7). Indeed, the walking on the sea is hardly a miracle; all sea gods, sea men, sea spirits can live in the sea, walk at the bottom of it, walk or drive on it; and as Jesus is the Son of the Creator, or is himself the Creator of the heavens above, of the earth beneath, and of the waters under the earth,<sup>3</sup>—that is, the waters on

<sup>1</sup> C. G. Montefiore: "The Bible for Home Reading." Part I.

<sup>2</sup> "*He* showed *him* the place." I wish I were allowed to write English like this.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xx. 4; Deuteronomy. iv. 18, etc.

which all the land floats like a raft,—I should expect him (*a priori*) to be able to command, and in every way to make use of, the earth and all that is therein. [When we dig downwards we find water; if we could dig far enough we should come to a floor of water where there is no land; the under surface of this floor of water, which is strong and as a molten looking-glass,<sup>1</sup> is the sky of the under-world, just as our sky also is made of water covered with light.<sup>2</sup> God “wearies the thick clouds by watering: he scatters his bright cloud: and it is turned about by his counsels, so that (the clouds) do whatever he commands them to the face of the world throughout the earth: (God) causes (the clouds) to come, whether for correction (that is, for chastisement) or for God’s (uninhabited) lands, or for mercy to men who need rain.”<sup>3</sup>]

To Elisha’s miracle I can remember no parallel; but if we consider it as one of the class of miracles in which what we call “the laws of gravity” are contravened, it may be included with the large number of cases of “levitation”—that is, floating or rising in the air. Andrew Lang gives a list of a few of the people who could do this:—there is the Rev. Stainton Moses—(editor of a paper called *Light*), who began experimenting in it about 1874, and has some excellent witnesses as to his miracles (one called Dr Speer, a sceptical person); D. D. Howe, a well-known medium (1856-1870); Iamblichus, an early witness as to spiritualistic phenomena; St Joseph of Cubertino; Lord Orrery’s butler, who (somewhere about 1690) was “perceived to rise from the ground, whereupon Mr Greatrix and another lusty man clapt their hands upon his shoulders, one of them before, and the other behind,” but could not hold him down, “he was carried in the air to and fro over their heads, several of the company still running under him, to prevent him from receiving hurt if he should fall”; Peruvians, Australians, and Zulus; Miss Nancy Wesley at Epworth in 1716;—“she and the bed she sat on both rose from the floor”; St Joseph of Cubertino, who flew up seventy times one Christmas Eve, “hearing sacred music, he flew up like a bird from the middle of the church to the high altar, where he floated for a quarter of an hour, yet

<sup>1</sup> Job xxxvii. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Job xxxvi. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Job xxxvii. 11-13. I have tried to make the meaning more obvious than it is to us in the Authorised Version.

upset none of the candles" ;—once, with a shout, he flew in the air holding a mad prince by the hair, and brought him down, cured ; once he flew over a pulpit, and once, more than eighty yards to a crucifix ;<sup>1</sup> the Buddhist soul can by high ascetic purity attain the power of rising in the air, stopping the sun, and overturning the earth ; St Richard (Chancellor to St Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury), St Philip Neri, St Ignatius Loyola, St Dominic, St Theresa, St Dunstan, St Francis of Assisi—these are a few of the people who could literally rise above the earth.

Now many of these people who could rise in the air were also possessed of what I may call another common miraculous power, that of shining, of being surrounded by light. Colonel Gardner and Pascal, Joan of Arc when she heard voices, Homer, Theocritus, Norse Sagas, Sir Charles Lee's daughter when she saw the ghost of her mother (1662), Eskimo angekoks (prophets) when seeing a spirit, St Francis of Assisi's fellow-monks, Saul (afterwards St Paul) on the way to Damascus, the beholders of the celebrated Cock Lane Ghost (investigated by Dr Johnson and Goldsmith), and others too numerous to mention, all see inexplicable lights or visions of men surrounded by light. Jesus goes up on a mountain, "and his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah (Elias) talking with him."<sup>2</sup>

Moses talks to God on Sinai, and afterwards his face shines so much that he has to wear a veil. Elijah wishes to have a contest with the priests of Baal and the prophets of the trees (groves) : each of the contesting parties build altars and put sacrifices on them : Baal sends no fire, but the "fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice and the wood and the stones and the dust and . . . the water." The fire of the Lord burns one sacrifice in the wilderness, one of Gideon's, one of David's, one of Solomon's ; "brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven" rains down on Sodom and Gomorrah ; and a fire from the Lord destroys Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron.<sup>3</sup> When the sun

<sup>1</sup> Till here, my remarks on "Levitation" are derived from A. Lang's "Cock Lane and Common-Sense."

<sup>2</sup> St Matthew xvii. 2, 3. Moses' and Elijah's appearances are cases of resurrection, and as such I deal with them later on. The voice from Heaven I have already dealt with, in connection with Jesus' baptism.

<sup>3</sup> Leviticus x. 1.

stood still at Joshua's prayer, it is said: "There was no day like that before it or after it, that *the Lord hearkened* unto the voice of a man."<sup>1</sup>

In conjunction with the worship of trees, which both the Bible and our knowledge of other Semitic peoples tell us to have been an early Jewish religion, these facts make me suppose that before God had risen to his final most high position he was a sun god. A lamp was always to burn in the tabernacle or temple (Exodus xxvii. 20). Now, the maintaining of a perpetual light or fire in order that the sun, too, may burn perpetually, the receiving of fire from heaven, and the worship of trees, seem always ceremonies connected with sun worship. All over Europe we can still find larger or smaller surviving traces of the following ancient Aryan ceremony:—

At midsummer, or in the spring, all fires were extinguished, and a sacred oak was cut down and a sacred piece of mistletoe (the soul of the oak) was plucked. By means of friction "fire from heaven" was obtained: at least the fire had no visible origin, was not born of fire—those primitive folks were too pious to be scientific; a man was burned in it, as representative of the god of vegetation. Priests and worshippers meantime adored the sun. The ashes were scattered over fields or buried in them. From the sacred fire, fires were lighted in every house and were kept alive till the next repetition of the ceremony.<sup>2</sup>

If the god of vegetation were not killed like this (in the person of a representative, and also in the form of a tree), he would grow old and feeble, and with him all vegetation and life, the manifestations of his power, would wither. But if he be killed and buried he will arise again and return to life as vigorous as before. His ashes will make the fields fertile.

Now the fire was born of the oak, and all the fires in the world (to these people) were born from such sacred fires. Fire making from any other source would be both sacrilegious and (in early times) troublesome. Consequently they supposed that all forces lived in and were born from trees. There was, perhaps, nothing but wood with which they could obtain fire. Therefore the sun, the great source of

<sup>1</sup> Joshua x. 14.

<sup>2</sup> The victim or representative of the god was enclosed in a cage of branches and leaves, to show that he was the spirit of vegetation; and "Jack-in-the-Green" is, with us, a remaining survival of him.

vegetation, was a holy tree fire. By putting out all fires when the sun began to go downwards in the heavens, or began to vigorously revive, they killed the sun: they made it live again by lighting a fire, and by "sympathetic magic" kept it alive by a perpetual burning throughout the year.<sup>1</sup> The whole ceremony served to kill the sun before it got too old and feeble, so that it might return to life in fair health. Hence I said that the early worship of trees by Israel made me suppose (in conjunction with other facts) that God was once a sun god. I have already said that the hosts of angels may once have been star gods.

Now all religions pass through an anthropomorphic stage: animal gods, sun gods, tree gods, corn gods,—all assume a human form, retaining perhaps parts of their older animal forms (heads, horns, tails, trunks, legs, etc.). The sun god is very likely to retain a halo of light: his representatives will also resemble him; he will reflect it on to them that talk with him. No man can look on either the sun's face or on God's.

"God is light," says the New Testament, and anthropomorphic references to God do not at all oppose my supposition that He began life by being the sun. It cannot be denied that there is some evidence in its favour. God speaks to Moses from a burning bush; his angels carry flaming swords<sup>2</sup>; "the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire" (Exodus xxiv. 17); "the Lord descended upon" (Sinai) "in fire"<sup>3</sup>; when prophets see him he is surrounded by light.

Sun worship and children of the sun are so widespread that what I have said would account everywhere for the origin of the idea that superior persons shine.

When the transfiguration of Jesus took place, when his face shone like the sun, and a bright cloud overshadowed them and a voice out of the cloud spoke, the disciples who heard it "fell on their faces." This is actually done before certain savage kings, especially when they eat or drink, as at these times their divine souls might go out at their mouths or other souls come in from some mischievous person. In order to avoid absorbing too much of the divine power, or being injured by its holy force, men fall on their faces. The king of Loango, the king of Aetheopia, the king of

<sup>1</sup> Those interested in this had better read Frazer's "Golden Bough."

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xix. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Genesis ii. 24.

Sabaea (Sheba), the king of Corea (to this day), the king of Mandalay, were either always shut up in their palaces or no one might look at them when they came out.<sup>1</sup>

And Jesus took five loaves and two fishes and said to his disciples: "Give ye them to eat."<sup>2</sup> And 5000 men ate and were all filled, and twelve baskets of fragments were left. Elisha once said: "Give the people that they may eat: for thus saith the Lord, They shall eat and leave thereof." So a hundred men were fed with twenty loaves and some corn, and left thereof.<sup>3</sup> A creditor came to take the two sons of a widow to be bondsmen. She only possessed "a pot of oil." Elisha told her to borrow as many empty vessels as she could and pour oil into them. She could not borrow enough vessels, the pot of oil was like Fortunatus' purse—inexhaustible. So the woman sold the oil and paid her debt.<sup>4</sup> The manna too had the following peculiarity:—however much you gathered you had always the same amount.<sup>5</sup> And again on another occasion Jesus fed 4000 men "besides women and children" with *seven* loaves and perhaps also a few little fishes (St Matthew mentions the fish, but St Mark does not), "and they did all eat and were filled; and they took up of the broken meat that was left *seven* baskets full." Thor also had a cup, the liquor in which no one could lower by drinking. [The number *seven* is a sacred number with the most ancient peoples. Perhaps they once worshipped five planets, the sun and the moon. Like three, seven is a useless, solitary, separated, strange number: neither can it be divided by any other number except itself. There are seven days in the week in most, but not in all, places:—in ancient Mexico there were five. There are three worlds,—earth, heaven, and under-world. Three gives rise to the triangle, a sacred symbol in India. (But perhaps the authors of the gospels were not absolutely accurate in these details of time and number.)]

When the Maccabees had reconquered Jerusalem there was not enough oil in the temple, that had not been polluted by the Greeks, to burn for more than a short time; but, by a miracle, the light that perpetually burned before the Holy of Holies (the most dangerously holy part of the temple) continued burning for *seven* days, until the Jews had been

<sup>1</sup> Frazer.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings iv. 43.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xvii. 17, 18.

<sup>4</sup> St Mark vi. 37.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Kings iv. 2, etc.

able to procure more oil. In memory of this there is observed to this day by the Jews the festival of Chanuka, during which seven candles are used every evening,—one being lighted on the first evening, two on the second, and so forth until on the last evening seven are lighted. It is admitted (I believe by the fairly orthodox) that the explanation may have been instituted later than the ceremony. “Myth changes, while custom remains constant; men continue to do what their fathers did, though the reasons on which their fathers acted have been long forgotten,” or are positively considered absurd and unpleasant. “The history of religion is a long attempt to reconcile old custom with new reason, to find a sound theory for an absurd practice.” Chanuka, indeed, commemorates a most important epoch in the world’s history: for, had the Jews been destroyed, there would now be no Jews and no Christians.<sup>1</sup> The unimportance to ancient minds of the meaning of ritual is well seen in Greek literature; the ancient Greek tourist, meeting within his own land with innumerable local rites, is not at all surprised when the inhabitants cannot explain their meanings or do not agree about them. He quite candidly imagines a story which would account for the ceremony and its connection with the god in whose honour it is done. Religion did not exist for the saving of individual souls, “but for the preservation and welfare of society, and in all that was necessary to this end every man had to take his part, or break with the domestic and political community to which he belonged.” A man’s guilt was a rebellion against a god and a danger to the nation; just as all the relatives of a murdered man had to kill the whole family of the murderer, so did the gods afflict a people with defeats in war, with diseases and famines, because *some* of the people had neglected to slay a sheep or a goat. It is because the meaning, and the feelings connected with a ceremony change so subtly and so often that we must go back a long way in the history of man in order to understand the origin of the Holy Communion and of most sacrifices.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Might not the seven lights have been originally merely a symbol of the gradual return of the “glory of the Lord” to the Temple, when the Greeks and their pollutions (“the abomination of desolation” mentioned by Daniel) had been driven away and purified? The miracle is not mentioned in the very interesting but inaccurate apocryphal “Book of the Maccabees.”

<sup>2</sup> On the communion and sacrifices I have mainly taken my information from “The Blood Covenant,” by H. Clay Trumbull, D.D., and



We must go back, I think, to when the *only* bond between men was the bond of relationship. A woman did not kill her child unless it was so young that it was not a human being; and a man did not kill his father unless he was very old, imbecile, and unhappy. (It was not until long after this time that men killed each other from benevolence, thinking that in the next world we remain as we were when we left this one, and that therefore it was best to die before you got feeble.) Small groups of men, then—we may suppose the man, his wife, his *children*, and perhaps one of his parents, to constitute such a group—were joined together by the intense sympathy of a pack, each member of which dreads the same foes and needs the same food—they hunt, eat, sleep together, grow fat or thin together, feast or are killed and eaten together; one blood is in them all, drawn at birth from a common source, and nourished throughout life by a common food. Politically they are complete communists: what endangers or cripples one kills or weakens all; the blood of one is the life of all, growing stronger or weaker as all grow stronger or weaker, and all are likely to grow stronger or weaker when one does.

Now there was a man who was forsaken, without kin, and alone in the forest, with no one to ever watch for him and to warn him when enemies approach; at night he had to hide in a cave, in darkness, while my lord the lion hunts; by day, himself afraid, he had to throw stones at birds and small animals, and pick fruit for himself. An unbearable life—for man is a social animal. He sees the group. Humbly crawling on the ground, and showing his hands empty of weapons, he approaches towards it. He lies on his face, in the most helpless and defenceless position, to show that he will not in any way attack them. He speaks to them; he entreats permission to live with them. (The men are much too savage to know slavery.) "But your blood is not our blood," they say; "your smell is not our smell." They sniff each other carefully. The stranger humbly admits that his smell is an inferior smell, but, seizing a stone, he gashes his arm. "Drink," he says, "this is my blood; come, drink, and it will be in your veins." The head woman (for it is believed that in the earliest times the wife was the chief) drinks. "But our death must be the

"Lectures on the Religion of the Semites," by W. Robertson Smith, M.A., LL.D.

spilling of your blood," she says, "one life must flow in all our veins": and gashing her own arm she offers it to him, and he drinks. Now all are one; one soul (or blood) is in them all. Here ends scene one; its essential features may still be witnessed. (See, for instance, Stanley's "Through the Dark Continent," vol. i. p. 493, and vol. ii. pp. 144 and 177; also accounts of Arabia and Lebanon.) Several ages pass between scene one and scene two. The group of men has grown larger and has learned to keep domestic animals; they wander about from pasture to pasture. The domestic animals are not wild; they neither hurt nor avoid man: they must therefore belong to his kin,—they must be of his blood, nay, being unlike him, they are better than he is, they are more nearly related to his first father. But man has now become a religious animal: after the practice of men he has made a god for himself. So then man, god, and the sacred animals are all of one kin. It must be admitted, however, that they drink the milk of their cattle or draw blood from them, but they dare not kill them. Agatharcides, describing some very primitive Troglodyte nomads of Africa, says that they derived all their substance from flocks and herds and lived on milk mingled with blood; it is only in very dry seasons that they killed aged or weakly beasts. (Probably aged, imbecile, unhappy men also.) The butchers were regarded as unclean, no doubt because they had killed sacred animals, touched the blood, and the life; further, "they gave the name of parent to no human being, but only to the ox and the cow, the ram and the ewe, from which they had their nourishment." Among the Caffres the cattle kraal is sacred, women may not approach it. But during this period, in which the primitive tribe possesses a herd in common, there are births and marriages, the group is always getting larger,—surely the blood kinship is getting weaker? How can it be strengthened, so that no man in the tribe need fear another? How can one man's life be mingled with another, and one life, one substance, be set in all their veins? Simple repetitions of scene one might suffice, but there is a more effective way of performing the ceremony when many persons are to be joined. The need is so great as to justify the means: the sacred cattle are related to all the men and to their god; if their god and they all eat of one of the cattle "the sacred cement" will be procured which keeps alive a living bond of union between men and their great Father, God, "this

cement being the actual life of the sacred and kindred animal." For Arabs say that "blood lickers" who have tasted each other's blood are more closely joined than "milk brothers" who sucked at one breast; one blood is in both in the one case and only one milk in the other. So the tribe proceed to their altar (a stone in which their god lives, with which he is or has been connected) and then—Nilus describes the ceremony as performed in ancient Arabia—a camel is chosen from the herd, and at rise of the daystar the tribe walk three times round the victim and round the altar, singing solemn chants; then the leader of the procession inflicts the first wound, and all the worshippers rush to drink the gushing blood and to hack off the quivering flesh, so that they may eat the entire camel before the life can have escaped from it. Before the star has disappeared in the rays of the rising sun the blood of life has been shared between the altar (in which the god dwells) and the worshippers:—one blood or life is in them all. If one man of the tribe is killed all the others will say: "*Our* blood has been spilled," as would be said to-day in Arabia. Whenever animals are eaten, then, part of the blood is given to God, and the feast is a communion, binding man to man, and God to man. With ancient Semitic peoples the bond of eating together is the firmest bond (see Joshua ix. 14); and to eat anything with the Arab to-day is to secure his temporary protection. When tribes became nations open-handed hospitality was the law of sacrificial feasts; "no sacrifice was complete without guests, and portions were freely distributed to rich and poor." In far later developments of sacrifice a sign is often needed that the victim is really to some extent possessed by, and therefore closely connected with, the god. When the Yakuts sacrifice to an evil spirit the beast must bellow and roll about "as if possessed." Apollo's prophetess could give no oracle until the victim trembled in every limb when the wine was poured on its head. So also with many other peoples—Greeks, Tarquinese, Hindoos, Churvash, etc.—wine or water is poured on the animal's head, and it must shake its head in some way before it is accepted as a sacrifice. In order that god and men may renew their bond of kinship all restrictions can be suspended: Brahmins, Sudras, Pariahs, men and women, all eat of one food and drink from one glass, regardless of caste, and without respect for the animal, which at ordinary times might not be killed or eaten; it is necessary that the

communion sacrifice may be celebrated.<sup>1</sup> In order that one substance, one life may with fullest effect enter in many bodies communion sacrifices are commonly eaten fasting. Some savages fast and use strong purges.<sup>2</sup> Harranians fasted on the 8th of Nisan and then ate and offered a sheep.<sup>3</sup> Egyptians fasted, then sacrificed and ate at the feast of Busiris. Probably the Jews fasted before sacrificing on their festivals, for strict Jews fast on New Year until they have heard the service, and in modern Judaism the offerings of prayer have been (necessarily) substituted for the fat and flesh of rams and goats. The Roman Catholic fasts before going to communion.

Again, in order that the essence, the life of the animal may be eaten, it must be eaten quickly: besides, it is sacred, and therefore likely to be dangerous, unless carefully disposed of; hence God says: "On the same day it shall be eaten up; ye shall leave none of it until the morrow: I am the Lord."<sup>4</sup>

Now when men learned to write, on admitting a stranger to their tribe, on making him one with them by the drinking of blood, they naturally exchanged a written covenant. You will see that as all the tribe was bound together by being of one blood, if a stranger was made akin to one, he became akin to all. Savages often wear these written covenants on necklaces. Before making the stranger a member of the tribe he will often have to undertake to observe all tribal laws and customs—though this is almost self-evident. Instead of a written agreement, or in addition to it, the stranger may purposely make a prominent scar or gash where he cut himself for the ceremony of blood kinship, or elsewhere, in order that any member of the tribe may at once see that he is a friend. Some Indian and Arabian sects gash themselves on the face and elsewhere as a sign of a covenant made with a god. Finally, if you have confidence in the other party to the covenant, you may let him drink your blood without drinking his (If you consider scene one, you will understand this.) Hence the priests of Baal cut themselves to renew their covenant with Baal, to show him that they are still his. Hence, too, circumcision

<sup>1</sup> Dubois' "Description of Men and Customs of India," Part II. chap. xi., quoted by Turnbull.

<sup>2</sup> Thomson's "Masai Land," p. 430.

<sup>3</sup> "Fihrist," p. 322.

<sup>4</sup> Leviticus xxii. 30.

as a sign of the covenant is practised by Kaffirs, Australians, Jews, and others.

Concerning the "sacredness" of the victim: in the "bonphoria," or murder of the ox, an Athenian sacrifice, oxen were driven round the altar, and the one that ate of leaves on the altar was selected as victim, so that it could be said that it was selected by chance. A solemn inquiry was held as to its death—an inquest; each of the numerous people concerned excused himself and blamed someone else; finally the knife and the axe were condemned and cast into the sea. In another Greek sacrifice the knife was concealed in leaves, and the animal made to kill itself.

Probably when God says, "you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes, and you shall write them upon the posts of your house,"<sup>1</sup> and also, "you shall put on the fringe on the borders of your garments a thread of blue,"<sup>2</sup> these are all signs of God's covenant with Israel. The Rabbis say that God (as the other contracting party) wears these tokens also. The Bible may seem to explain the affairs differently: meanings change, customs remain constant.

Now let us look at scene three. It represents God covenanting with Abraham. "Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him. . . . I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. Thou shalt keep my covenant, therefore, thou and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and thee, and thy seed after thee:—

Every man child among you shall be circumcised. . . . And the uncircumcised man child . . . shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant," and I could not safely rely upon his being loyal to me.<sup>3</sup>

And now the prelude to scene four. In course of time men found out that drinking blood is nasty. Why not smear one blood on everyone, and make an external communion? Besides, the blood is regarded as the essence of the creature (we shall have to examine this idea in con-

<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy vi. 8, 9. <sup>2</sup> Numbers xvi. 38. <sup>3</sup> Genesis xvii. 3, etc.

sidering the soul); it is the life, says the Bible, and you shall not drink it:—because if you do the life or soul of the animal will enter into you. I am well aware that these explanations do not seem to agree with previous explanations; but you must remember that it is only for the sake of effect that I have made it seem as though religious ceremonies were developed in one nation alone. As a nation spreads out and becomes divided into two brotherly nations one might continue to perform a ceremony in a way that seemed repulsive to the other. The Esthonians, some North American Indians, the Arabs, the Romans, and some Papuan tribes of New Guinea, all these more or less avoided eating blood for the reason given above. Because the animal is sacred, related to the god, and because the blood is its very life, one nation eats the blood, and for exactly the same reasons other nations are afraid to eat it. The eating of the “blood of sacrifices” is several times specially forbidden to the Jews; what is unknown is not forbidden. Now let us look at scene four:—

“Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning and built an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

And he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen to the Lord.

And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar (of God).

And he took the book of the covenant and read it to all the people: and they said: ‘All that the Lord has said, we will do and be obedient.’

And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people and said:

‘Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord has made with you concerning all these words.’<sup>1</sup>

Properly speaking, the stones are stones till the blood comes on them; it is the sacred blood that makes them a sacred altar. It seems as though each tribe symbolically made a separate covenant, though, in fact, Moses acted for all in one deed.

Now it is especially when God is offended that he must be reminded of his kinship to his people, and that it must be renewed. Also the sacredness of the animal is gradually

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xxiv. 4-8.

forgotten. "In Arabia, in the time of Mohammed," a man might kill a domestic (once sacred) animal if he merely killed it in the name of a god. And, further, all religions tend to become moral. Early religions are un-moral: everything is a power, and the evil powers are most to be conciliated. But as people came to connect sacrifices with times of need and to turn to God when they could not help themselves, and as with the decay and disappearance of the sacredness of the animal the communion idea of sacrifice is weakened though not destroyed (for, whatever the substance be, it is partaken of by both God and worshipper), and as times of need come to be regarded as due to the righteous anger of the Lord and no longer as his mere whims, the sacrifice becomes more and more associated with an atonement.

In order to simplify the explanation of sacrifices I have so far omitted another idea which was connected with them and which was gradually developed and changed. The king of Loange and the king of Fida are so infectiously sacred that no one may touch any food which they have left on their plates. Hence when God eats any food the rest of that food must in some way be endowed with special powers, be holy.

Jean de Brébeuf, a Jesuit missionary, was horribly tortured by American Indians, and behaved with great courage. After his death the Indians laid open his breast and drank his blood, while a chief devoured his heart, hoping thereby to inherit his courage and virtue.<sup>1</sup> Among the Dyaks of North West Borneo young men may not eat venison, as it would make them timid as deer. A Chinaman in Soul ate a whole tiger in order to become brave. The Tariános and Tucánes drink the ashes of their relatives in order to inherit their powers.

If, then, a god by eating part of a sacrifice transubstantiates the rest of it so that it is almost like to the god himself, and if by eating anything its properties literally become yours, it will be well to eat of what God eats.

The only question to be determined is whether gods do eat. In the Papuan Island of Tamra the chief prays thus over first-fruits:

"Compassionate father! Here is some food for you; eat it; be kind to us on account of it."

<sup>1</sup> Ragueneau, cited by Parkman in "Jesuits in North America in Seventeenth Century," p. 389.

Then all shout together.<sup>1</sup>

But men soon see that the gods do not progress well with their eating. In Mexico the natives offer feasts to the souls of the dead, who hover over the food and smell it or suck out the soul, the essence, the nutritive quality:—meantime, the priests and the worshippers eat the rest of the food. The Fijians eat each other after the gods have taken their part of the sacrificial meal, which is the soul. (In no case known to us does cannibalism originally arise except in connection with religion. According to the "communion theory" of sacrifice man is the most obviously suitable victim.) Some gods lick the food, leaving the material parts unaltered, others eat the smell, "the sweet savour," the air which rises from the food, the breath, the steam, the blood, while some like sweet incense, others tobacco smoke, others the smoke of burnt-offerings.

I have not yet explained (I cannot entirely explain) how the offerings came to be made according to certain recipes: but the general procedure with many Biblical offerings and sacrifices is now plain. A meat-offering to the Lord shall be of fine flour and oil (flour alone would not form anything like a cake and would not burn nicely), and frankincense shall be put on it; part shall be burned by fire on the altar, a sweet smell<sup>2</sup> (caused by the frankincense) going up as God's share of the offering: the rest shall be eaten by Aaron and his sons, being "most holy," a part of an offering from which God, too, has eaten,<sup>3</sup> and which, therefore, possesses through infection some of the properties of God, which Aaron and his sons, by eating, will themselves obtain. Next, let us take a peace-offering, a lamb or goat or one of the herd (which, I suppose, means a bull or cow). It must be without blemish, else the animal could not originally be considered to be related to the god. Aaron's sons must sprinkle the blood on the altar, in order that the altar may be made holy and that God may be attracted to it. The fat and the kidneys shall be burned on the altar; this is "the food"<sup>4</sup> of God, the sweet smell of it goes to the Lord. (I do not know that I ever smelled a burning lamb, but I doubt whether it would smell nice according to my taste.) Then we come to the sin-offerings; parts of these, if they were bullocks and

<sup>1</sup> Turner's "Polynesia," quoted by Tylor.

<sup>2</sup> "Savour" in Authorised Version.

<sup>3</sup> Leviticus ii. 2, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Leviticus iii. 11, etc.



therefore large animals, were burned outside the camp.<sup>1</sup> The worshipper laid his hand on the head of the animal in order to transfer his sin to the animal. Some of its blood is sprinkled and poured out and part of it is burned.<sup>2</sup> Concerning a burnt-offering we read :

"Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy : and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof on any garment, thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place. But the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden " (for cleansing) "shall be broken ; and if it be sodden in a brazen pot, it shall be both scoured and rinsed in water. All the males among the priests shall eat thereof ; it is most holy."

The blood infects the garment, the garment discharges holiness into the water, the water makes the pot dangerous. But the holy priests can safely eat and inherit fresh vigour from the sacrifice, which God has saturated with power by himself eating thereof. When head and inwards are eaten, it is because they were once considered the special seats of life.

As in course of time sacrifices became more and more closely associated with times of trouble, when man needs God and tries to remind him of the relationship between man and God, and to renew the bond between them ; and as times of trouble became more and more associated with God's righteous anger, when he visits the sins of a man upon a nation and the sins of the fathers upon their children ; it will be both easy and pleasant to gradually associate the sacrifice with the return of God's favour, and to consider it as a scapegoat, a substitute for the real offender. The idea was much simpler to early minds than to us, because as all the tribe was one person, and the cattle was still very nearly part of the tribe, in punishing the goat, the tribe was punished. But I hate arguing : look at these few selected facts : In the Western Himalayas a dog is intoxicated, fed with sweetmeats, led round the village, then chased and killed. With it all misfortunes and diseases of the people are destroyed. At the annual festival of Sacaea in Babylon a man who had been condemned to death for some crime was placed on the throne and honoured for five days : then he was scourged, to drive

<sup>1</sup> Obviously it would be too disgusting to burn the main parts of a bullock in the middle of a camp or of a town.

<sup>2</sup> Leviticus iv.

all demons out of him (who might otherwise reduce the value of the offering), and crucified. He died *instead of* the king: for in earlier days the sacred king was not allowed to get old and decayed and so bring the whole land down to weakness. Similarly, the gods of Mexico were *represented by* and honoured through men: each year these men were killed, in order that the gods might always be young. The Egyptians put the sins of Egypt *on to the head of a bull*, sold it to Greeks, or cast it into the river (Herodotus ii. 39). A slave of the Albanian Temple of the Moon was sometimes anointed and killed with a sacred spear. "All the people stood on his body in order to transfer their sins to him." In South India, among the Badajos of the Neilgherry Hills, the *sins of a dead man are placed on a buffalo calf*, a set form of confession (the same for everyone) is recited, the calf set free, and never used for ordinary purposes. When a Moor has a headache he beats a lamb or a goat till it falls down: the animal has a headache, and God ought to be satisfied. "In Travancore when a Rajah is dangerously ill," a holy Brahmin . . . closely embraces the king, and says:

"O king! I undertake to bear all your sins and diseases. May your highness live long and reign happily."

The sin-bearer is then banished from the country.<sup>1</sup>

In India mothers cut off their fingers, lest God should take from them their children. The Carthaginians gave Kronos (a god) captives or purchased children *instead of* their own. (*Diodor. sic. xx. 14.*) Artemis in Laodicæa received a doe *in place of* a virgin.

Now with Semites (and other nations) the first-born both of cattle (all of which had to be sacrificed or redeemed) and of fruit—that is, the first three years' produce—(which might not be eaten), and of men (all of whom had to be redeemed), and also the first-fruits of the harvests (of which offerings had to be made), were peculiarly sacred: the blood of kinship was more vigorous in them. Hence also they were peculiarly suitable for sacrifice and for those so essential sacrifices in which the offering replaced the offerer.

"It was an ancient custom in a crisis of great danger that the ruler of a city or nation should give his beloved

<sup>1</sup> These instances of substitution are, till here, taken from Frazer. I then quote some from Tylor, and conclude with the striking human substitutes from Frazer,

son to die for the whole people as a ransom offered to the avenging demons; and the children thus offered were slain with mystic rites. So Crocus, whom the Phœnicians call Israel, being king of the land and having an only-begotten son called Jeoud (for in the Phœnician tongue Jeoud signifies 'only begotten'), dressed him in royal robes and sacrificed him upon an altar in a time of war, when the country was in great danger from the enemy." Philo of Byblus is speaking, and it is quoted by Eusebius.

Again: "When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him he took with him seven hundred men that drew sword, to break through to the king of Edom: but they could not do so. Then he took his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall" (of the besieged town).<sup>1</sup> It is probable that the king of Moab ought to have offered himself as the *most* sacred person and therefore as the most efficacious sacrifice.

The explanations given up to now, will, I think, make plain the intention of the ritual for the day of atonement, on which was offered in the temple the most important of the sin-offerings mentioned in the Old Testament.

(I am sorry to see you gaping, my dear reader. As we are dealing really with the crucifixion, considered as a sin-offering, and as this is usually held to be connected with the very foundations of Christianity, I feel it to be necessary to add a little more. If you foresee my intentions and agree with my conclusions, pray skip.)

As soon as it was morning on the tenth day of Tishree, the high priest, who had not been allowed to sleep all the preceding night, having either lectured on the law or been read to, bathed and put on his "golden garments," the garments that were of about the second degree of holiness. He then again washed his hands and feet to purify them, after having handled the most holy garments in putting them on. He next slew the ordinary daily burnt-offering and sprinkled its blood; he then offered incense and performed other daily duties of the same kind. He now, for the sake of safety, washed his hands and feet, after having touched the sacrifices, blood, incense, etc. He then took off his golden garments, and, of course, bathed after having worn them. He put on white garments and washed his hands and feet. White is the colour for the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings iii. 26, 27.

day of atonement — the obvious colour for a day of purifying, when scarlet sins are to vanish and become white as snow.<sup>1</sup>

In doing all this he was following, at anyrate, the spirit of the Bible (I have not time to see whether he followed the exact letter), as shown by the following:—

“He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh and . . . a linen girdle and . . . the linen mitre; these are the holy garments; *therefore* shall he wash his flesh in water and so put them on” (Lev. xvi. 4). “And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there and he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place and put on his garments, and come forth and offer his burnt-offering,” etc. (Lev. xvi. 24).

But I beg, I pray, I entreat you never to believe a word I say when you can test it for yourself; look at Leviticus xvi. If the common modern idea of holiness is right, *why wash after* touching a *holy* thing? Meantime, while we are arguing, the high priest is engaged in offering his bullock for a sin-offering to make “an atonement for himself and for his own house.” He has laid his hand on the head of the animal (to transfer his sins to it), and is saying:

“I entreat, Yahveh” (for this was the only day on which the name of God was ever uttered, and then only by the high priest), “I have sinned, I have done wrong, I have disobeyed, before You, I and my house: I entreat You by Your name, to forgive, to remit, to absolve the sins, the iniquities, the transgressions which I and my house committed before You: as it is written in the law of Moses, Your servant, from Your glorious mouth: ‘For on that day shall the high priest make an atonement for you to cleanse you from all your sins before the Lord.’”<sup>2</sup>

Now the high priest was alone with God in the most

<sup>1</sup> See Leviticus xvi. All this washing can be deduced from Biblical commandments, but I am actually using the description of the temple service which is recited on the day of atonement in the modern synagogue.

<sup>2</sup> The meaning of the word which is usually translated as “entreat” is not known for certain. It may have a mystic value as a charm to make God hear because itself connected with the syllables of his name.

holy part of the temple. In the outer courts stood priests and people—most of the male population of Palestine gathered from all their houses. They filled the entire temple, every man standing near to his neighbour. But when they heard the Name, the mighty, the terrible and the glorious—the Name wherein God was—and near to them—proceeding from the mouth of the high priest with its holy power—in order to escape danger they kneeled and prostrated themselves and fell upon their faces: “Blessed,” they all said, “blessed be the Name of his glorious majesty for ever and beyond,” meaning to bless the sovereignty of God, which is the sovereignty of his name. The high priest then said: “You shall be clean.”

Two goats were waiting for him at the door of the eastern court of the temple. Two golden lots (?) were in a box: he shook them, and drawing, made God determine which goat was for the Lord and which for the scapegoat, to bear the sins and punishments of Israel.<sup>1</sup> He tied a scarlet thread round the scapegoat, so as to distinguish it.

He now returned to the bull and laid on it the sins of all the “children of Aaron, your holy people,” just as previously he had done for his own immediate household, excepting the change needed in the form of confession. The people again fell on their faces before the Name, and he again declared “you shall be clean.” He now slew the bull and caught its blood in a basin; then burning incense (to protect himself from the sight of God) “that he die not” (Lev. xvi. 13), he began to sprinkle the blood in order to renew the sanctity of the mercy-seat and round about it. He then killed the sin-offering goat and sprinkled its blood. (The sprinkling was really more complicated than I am indicating, but that does not matter, I am not cheating, it is all in the Bible.) This sprinkling, by putting holy blood on the polluted places, made them holy again: it is a somewhat late idea, belonging to an age when holiness and uncleanness are distinctly differentiated. The day of atonement is not one of the earlier institutions. It is not mentioned in the first record in Exodus of the festivals and solemn days of the Jews,<sup>2</sup> although it is there said: “Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year,” as though these three had been all the feasts. (There are other reasons why it is not supposed to be a “funda-

<sup>1</sup> Leviticus xvi. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xxiii. 14, etc.

mental" institution, but this is the simplest. I shall mention another later on.)

Meantime the priest has gone to the remaining goat—the scapegoat. He confessed sins, putting them on its head, and this time speaking of the sins committed by "your people, the house of Israel"—in other respects it was as it had been twice before—the people fell on their faces before the name, and the priest said: "You shall be clean." Now the priest had put the sins of Israel "upon the head of the live goat," and he then sent it away "by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness; and the goat shall bear upon itself all the iniquities (of Israel) *into a land that is not inhabited*: and he shall let go the goat into the wilderness."<sup>1</sup> The goat had the sins on its head: if it went into an inhabited land it would be certain to let some sins get on to someone. In order to avoid danger it seems that (contrary to the words of the law) the Jews actually threw the goat over a precipice, thus hoping to destroy with it all their sins for the past year. The high priest still had some more sacrifices to offer: some being offered when he was dressed in "golden" and some when he was dressed in (white) linen clothes—of course, he washed whenever he took off and whenever he put on clothes. At length he finally took off his linen clothes for the last time, and they were never used again; they had been to the very presence of God, and it would not be safe to use them.<sup>2</sup>

The observances connected with "scapegoats" in some countries are extremely picturesque. Some nations put their sins in a ship and let it sail away on the ocean. If it is driven back on to shore anywhere this is an extremely bad omen—the sins and misfortunes are come back.

Renan somewhat rashly says somewhere that Christianity is synonymous with religion; and Christianity—not the teaching of Jesus, but the Christianity that everyone has seen and heard of—is founded on the idea that Christ died that we may live in safety. The scapegoat used to die annually that Israel might live in safety. True that it was also necessary that you (*i.e.* all Israel) should "afflict your souls" and "do no manner of work" on that day: "it shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest," "the soul that shall not be afflicted in that same day shall be cut

<sup>1</sup> Leviticus xvi. 21, 22.

<sup>2</sup> To be accurate, he bathed his whole body five times, and washed his hands and feet ten times.

off from among his people.”<sup>1</sup> “You shall afflict your souls, from evening till evening shall you celebrate your Sabbath.” The “afflicting of souls” mainly means fasting. Fasting for the sake of fasting, of afflicting your soul, is (as you might expect) not an early practice of savage religion: it is only when the savage has learned (partly by chance) to associate fasting with seeing spirits and being possessed by a god, and possibly also with making ample provision for the needs of the ghosts of the dead, that he adopts this most absurd religious practice for its own sake.—

I feel tired and bloodstained (but it is only ink); sadly and angrily I ask: “Why was it necessary that all these oxen and sheep and scapegoats should die? Was it necessary that in Europe, in Asia, in America, and in Africa men should burn and crucify and behead each other to please their gods? And why did God, who after all was the best of all the gods, demand the death of his Son? If he could only have remained as he appeared to Isaiah, wishing to call all nations, Israel, and her enemies Egypt and Assyria, his peoples, wishing to make his house a house of prayer for all nations, desiring that men should help one another and not that they should bow their heads like bulrushes, or fast, or burn bulls, how much better it would have been! To Isaiah the universe was an artistic whole: if there were evil in it he yet almost saw (as we may see) that there is an evolution that leads always towards a more perfect world. Hunger and cold and enemies and needs—such hard masters—lead man upwards towards a higher civilisation and a greater degree of consciousness; so that he learns to reason and to feel and to know and to understand that one man cannot be happy until all men are happy, and that one man cannot be just until all men are just—so closely connected are we one with another. The reign of happiness will come when we have made it. Not in the past, when man was a savage, but in the future lies our Eden. But this was not enough for most men. Christianity, with its revivals of old ideas and its combinations of the spirit of different nations, was necessary for the education of many countries. And what is the main idea of Christianity: why was it necessary that Jesus should die?

Once upon a time God planted two trees. They were his trees, and very holy. God said to a man and a woman

<sup>1</sup> Leviticus xxiii. 27, etc.

who lived near the trees: "You shall not eat of the fruit of these trees, nor shall you *touch* them."<sup>1</sup>

But there was a serpent, who in speech and manner was very like me. He said to the woman:

"I have heard this tale before. The tree is sacred, holy, tabooed. I believe that it is by eating the sacred fruit that God himself is God. If, then, you eat the sacred fruit you may become like God."

So one man and one woman sinned and ate the forbidden fruit.

Now "God was walking in the garden in the cool of the day,"<sup>2</sup> and (as you may imagine) he was very vexed with what the serpent had said.

"You base atheist!" he said to the serpent, "you shall crawl all your life on the ground. You liar! swindler! of course your base mind cannot understand the mysteries of holy religion. As for you, man and woman, you have eaten *my* apple, I cannot save you from your fate. Its holy power will discharge itself on to everything you see (and further); the earth, the plants, the animals, the unborn generations of men—all will suffer from it. Through you the whole of creation has become possessed by the spirit of the apple. It is a blood-feud: I shall kill you and your children, and your children's children—all your relations. One man has sinned, or, to be more accurate, one man and one woman. I will have their blood—their blood which is in all their tribe. All the animals belong to the children of men, and I will kill all of them also. It is a vendetta. Go out of my garden, I will not have you here." So he drove out the man, and placed cherubim with flaming swords at the east of the garden to guard the tree of life. "For," God said to his army of angels, "the man has already eaten some of our apples, and it has made him like us. The serpent was not quite wrong—I must admit that—though he is a devil."

"Father," said Jesus, "can nothing save them? For surely they ate because they wished for wisdom. Is it because man is base that he seeks to know good and evil? We see all that men will think and invent and write and try and build and paint; we see all that they will suffer—

<sup>1</sup> Genesis iii. 4. The Genesis tale has been formed out of two similar tales, in one of which there was one forbidden tree and in the other two such trees.

<sup>2</sup> Genesis iii. 8.



men of sorrows, and acquainted with grief—and yet, in spite of all their needs, of all their pains, they strive for knowledge, beauty, perfection. Even the serpent thinks that he is doing right in trying to open his own eyes, and those of other people. Can nothing save them?"

"One man has sinned—or rather one man and one woman—the whole earth is desecrated. If there were one so holy that he was related to me, and also to mankind; if the blood of such a man was shed upon the earth he would make it holy again, for his blood, which is his life, would call to me from the earth,<sup>1</sup> and I should go to visit it. If his blood washed men, and if he brought his wounds to heaven and smeared his blood on me, one blood would be on me and on men, and I should be obliged to respect this blood covenant,—men would again be related to me, they would be my children, having my blood. And if men ate his flesh and his blood they would become what he was—holy and good, and my children. If he—the scapegoat—suffered, the sinners, of course, need not suffer." Thus spake the Divine Justice.

"But seeing how usual substitutes will be in sacrifice, can you not allow that the actual body of the divine man be not eaten? What is flesh, and what is blood; is it not the spirit alone that makes all things? Seeing that it is not the food that sanctifies, but the sanctity with which it is eaten, may not the kingdom of heaven come to men if they think that they eat of the flesh and the blood and eat it not?"

"They that know me (Israel my bodyguard), and they that know not my Name—with both shall it be so: in early ages they eat that wherein they suppose their gods to dwell, but the gods of the Gentiles are not gods. Men cling to ancient ceremonies, but minds and manners are changed: men and manners are terrified at the coarseness of ancient worship. Let the angels show you that it is so in the records of days to come. And I, too, will accept it as a sanctification of men, if they eat the flesh and blood of the Divine Sacrifice in the form of bread and wine."

In the heavens are the souls of all that shall be, of men and of books and of things; for on a certain day all that is to enter the world during the year passes before God, and he determines the fate of each. And there Jesus read what should be as it was written in the inmost souls of things.

<sup>1</sup> Genesis iv. 10.

We cannot read exactly what has been. But whereas in Scotland formerly,<sup>1</sup> in Borneo, and Arabia, a bride and bridegroom drink (or drank) blood out of one cup, in token that one blood (or soul) shall be in two bodies; with Russians, Georgians, Circassians, and Jews wine is drunk by bride and bridegroom out of the cup. Evidently, and for obvious reasons, wine has been substituted for blood. The wine was regarded as the blood of the grape by ancient peoples, and as the Jews were forbidden to eat the blood or life of any animals, and were especially afraid of eating the blood of a sacred sacrifice, Jesus could hardly have done otherwise than substitute something for blood in the communion sacrifice. It has yet to be proved that Jesus was not an observer of the laws of Moses, which strictly prohibit the eating of all blood. There are two reasons why bread may have been chosen as a representative for flesh: firstly, because bread is a most ancient sacrifice; and secondly, because "bread and wine" were already known as a conventional symbol for a meal that was at once solemn (perhaps sacred) and yet joyous,—a combination of feelings that may seem strange to the modern Christian, but which was comprehensible enough to people who rejoiced before the Lord and who feasted on sacrificial meats.

What instances are there of bread being used as a sacrifice? Among the Creek Indians of North America the bush or festival of the first-fruits was the chief ceremony of the year. All remaining grain derived from the previous year was burned. The people fasted two nights and a day. A little of the new corn was burned as a burnt-offering, and then all solemnly ate of it with bear's oil. The corn spirit, or spirit of vegetation reviving in the "new" corn, is here eaten as a communion in order that worshippers may be at one with the spirit (or god). When, through advance of knowledge, the spirit is no longer supposed to dwell in the corn the offering is made as a sign of gratitude for the new harvest and as an act of homage, just as savage chiefs receive a present as a compliment, or as a new Czar takes bread and salt from his subjects. Myth changes, but ritual remains. This solemn first-fruit eating is found among Basutos, Ashantees, Kochs of Assam, Tjumba Islanders (E. Indies), and many others: it was done in ancient Europe, where, however, the corn spirit was supposed either to flee before the reapers into the *last*

<sup>1</sup> Ross, "Book of Scottish Poems," i. 218.

sheaf cut or into an animal. This sheaf or animal was eaten as a communion sacrifice.

This is essentially the explanation of the Passover, for which a totally different origin is assigned in the Bible. But then the Old Testament discouraged the communion idea of sacrifices and encouraged the idea that they were gifts or atonements. Why, then, all the sprinkling of blood on Aaron and priests, on altar, on tabernacle or temple, or on worshippers? This can only be explained as an external communion. In the unsettled and unfortunate days at the end of the Jewish state the cult of mystical sacrifices spread all over the world; the Jews offered swine, vermin, dogs, mice ("unclean" animals); gods were invoked by animal names and the initiated acknowledged kinship with the same animals (Porph. : De Abst. iv. 16). *Unleavened* bread at Passover was really originally used, because to nomads leavened bread is a foreign luxury; later it was an innovation, and at a solemn communion sacrifice the older bread would, of course, be used, for the gods like the good old ways belonging to the good old times. Robertson Smith adds that leavening was also connected with corruption, and all sacrifices must be eaten as quickly as possible—that is, while the life is still in them. I am inclined to suggest that fermentation or leavening suggests the action of a spirit of fermentation *in addition to* the original corn spirit; leavened bread is "possessed" by another spirit, and so would be avoided. Leavened offerings are in so many cases *forbidden*—"No meat-offering . . . shall be made with leaven : for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord made by fire"<sup>1</sup>—that it is to me almost impossible—apart from all evidence derived from other peoples—to accept an explanation for the use of unleavened bread in one Jewish ceremony, which in no way explains its being used or forbidden in other ceremonies. Honey is forbidden, by-the-by, because it so easily ferments in a hot country.

Allow me to digress a little more in order to finish what I wish to say about the Passover.

All the Semitic nations had a festival in the month Nisan.

Now on the Passover, in addition to burnt-offerings, with their meat-offerings, and a sin-offering, there was to be offered a male lamb of the first year—the paschal lamb, about which so many sermons have been preached. Male and first-born animals are preferred, because (in the

<sup>1</sup> Lev. ii. 11. There are plenty of other instances of the prohibition.

East at anyrate) the female is hardly human or truly sheepish, and the first-born has the strongest blood kinship. The lamb is young (of the first year) because in early times it is considered less terrible to kill a baby (lamb or child) than an adult. It shall not be "eaten raw nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire";<sup>1</sup> this is said, because (as we have seen) in very early times Semitic peoples ate their sacrifices raw, or merely after washing them with water, in order to eat the very life of them before it could escape: hence it is still commanded that it "shall be eaten in haste, with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand."<sup>2</sup> The blood of the lamb shall be smeared on the two side-posts of the house<sup>3</sup>—this is to sanctify the house,—it was originally meant to show the god that the blood of his relative was on all the houses of his people, binding them into one communion, or to bring the god himself (incarnated in a sheep) into contact with all his people. Myth changes, ritual remains unaltered. Further, for seven days unleavened bread is to be eaten: whoever "eats that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations you shall eat unleavened bread." I have explained this and showed you where parallel institutions can be found. It is, in origin, the eating of the corn spirit as it returns to life in the first-fruits of the new harvest.

If Jesus' last supper was the Passover (and the critics cannot agree whether it was or not), and if he did not institute his Eucharist till then (and "The Gospel according to St John" does not seem to agree with the others about this), unleavened bread as well as wine would both have been before his eyes ready for use as symbols. The wine is ritually drunk (to this day) as a Passover token of rejoicing because of the redemption from Egypt. But, in any case, as I have endeavoured to show you, unleavened bread was well known, sacrificially, as the flesh of the new-born corn spirit, reviving after the death of winter. Among many people it was eaten as an expiatory communion, whereby God entered into, and annually cleansed, mankind: hence the festival was often preceded by a season of idleness, of licentious freedom between the sexes, and insolence between

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xii. 9.<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 11.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 22.

the social classes. The time was coming when the old corn, the ordinary leaven of life, would be burned, and by eating the new-born god, men would be reborn to righteous innocence.

And I said that not only did Jesus know that bread was an ancient sacrifice but also that bread and wine were symbols of a solemn and yet joyous meal: wine, the life of the grape, which makes men's hearts (or lives) joyous, and bread, the staff of life that supports them in daily drudgery. As such they are suitably chosen for the feast of wisdom; to which wisdom invites men, saying: "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled";<sup>1</sup> wisdom, who also says: "My delights are with the children of men . . . blessed are they that keep my ways . . . all they that hate me love death."<sup>2</sup> I have now tried to explain why Jesus said that bread and wine were his flesh and blood and why he told his disciples to eat them.

Perhaps we might now look a very little at two South American communion ceremonies. It seems that one of the most religious peoples who have ever lived were the ancient Mexicans or Aztecs. They were baptised soon after birth, and after a man had received absolution for sins confessed to a priest, a civil court could not punish him for them. Their best-loved occupations were war and an adventurous merchant life lived in caravans, and involving danger. As with the ancient Jews, adultery was punished by death, as well as drunkenness in the young. Such was "the crafty policy of the priests" (so Prescott calls it) that the children were taught their religion while they were young, so that they might acquire a habit of implicit reverence for it before their minds had sufficient strength and versatility to be able to question it.

Their great temple was built of huge stones, and shaped like a pyramid from which the top has been removed. Two perpetual fires on high altars and one or two fifty-foot towers, as well as the stone for the sacrifice, stood on the flat roof of the pyramid. Before the eyes of the whole town the priests solemnly mounted the open-air staircases that, zig-zagging, rose to the roof; with them the victim—and he to-day is the god; in him for a year a god has dwelt, and man has worshipped him; for a year they

<sup>1</sup> The Jews mingled their wine with water; in a hot climate this is necessary. Proverbs ix. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Proverbs viii. 31, etc.

kneeled and prostrated themselves before him—sing-song voices, scent and gold and flowers, nobles that feasted him, incense that rose for him—all these proclaimed him good and a god: now his bright clothes are changed, goddesses weep for him, and women that smiled for him, life that so lived in him—all must now go from him; the flowers, the sacred flowers that crowned his head, the flutes, the sacred flutes that spoke his soul's words, they fall, he throws them away and breaks them. The priests, the greatest priests, are ready for him. The scarlet-robed priest opens him, for he is the feast. The high priest silently raises his heart, the life itself, the moving heart—he holds it towards the sun, the life from whom all life comes. To the great nobles of the land the body shall be given:—in joyous and reverent feast they eat it. This is living flesh, in which dwells one who comes from heaven, so that a man may eat of it and inherit the powers of God. The god still lives though he has been killed—next year he will be killed again: so shall God be made to live in the men who have eaten him.

Now turn to ancient Peru, an extraordinary country in which was almost realised one of the dreams that is so attractive to the more romantic and younger imaginations of our own age. All the land was divided into three parts: one belonged to the Sun, and served to maintain temples and worship; one belonged to the Inca, who was descended from the Sun, and who ruled; and one belonged to the people, and was annually redivided, so that every man had a share. Roads over precipices and torrents, canals and aqueducts, to water sandy deserts, cultivated terraces constructed on almost precipitous mountains, gold mines, flocks of llamas wandering over the highest snow-covered wastes—all were constructed for, and belonged to, the priests and the Incas, who were the noble descendants of the Sun and of his sister and wife the Moon. (*The Inca* (or king) also usually, if not always, married his sister, doing so in memory of his great ancestor.) The ordinary people could not know poverty—money was unknown—their work and their reward were both ordained by the government—every man receiving according to the number of his family, though judges and local officials obtained a higher but fixed reward.

Prescott says: "The nearest approach to the Peruvian constitution was probably in Judea, where, on the recurrence of the great national jubilee, at the close of every

half-century, estates reverted to their original proprietors." However, we believe that this law, though contained in the so-called laws of Moses (which were compiled centuries after Moses, about whom nothing credible is related, could have lived), was never in force in Palestine: the prophets complain of its neglect, and previous to their time Israel was constantly engaged in the conquest and defence of their lands. In Peru, too (unlike ancient Palestine), the yearly tenant had no power to alienate or increase his property. The Peruvians were constantly engaged in religious wars for the conversion of the heathen.

In the great temple of Cuzco, the capital of ancient Peru, was the portrait of the Sun—a golden plate in the shape of a human face surrounded by rays—it was powdered with emeralds and jewels. The cornices of the temple were of gold, its censers, its ewers, its pipes to bring in the water, its altars—all were formed of the "golden tears shed by the golden sun," which we call gold. It is the period of the summer solstice—or rather we will suppose it to be so—and the Sun is about to return to make glad the hearts of his chosen people. In the morning twilight the people wait for him, crowding the streets. For three days they have fasted, in order to enjoy to the full the benefits of communion. Now at last his rays make golden the turrets of his temple—with joyous shouts the people greet him. It is a Turneresque scene. All are gaily dressed to meet him—orange and flame-coloured, vermilion and indigo, such are their turbans; rainbow and star, moon and lightning, such are their banners; bluish green shimmering, golden green flashing, such are the canopies of birds' feathers over the nobler heads; copper and silver, jewelled and white stone, such are their weapons. They shout joyously before their Sun—tom-tom clashes, sing-song voices, ting-tong tinklings, such joyous sounds grow louder as he comes nearer. The Inca pours out wine before him, that he may drink it in vapour, then the king, and after him the king's family, drink from the cup that the Sun drank from. In procession they go towards the temple. All remove their sandals as the ground grows sacred. Only the Inca and his family delay doing so till they reach the doorway, which they alone enter. Within golden lights struggle against each other, reflected from gold on every side. By the walls sit the king's ancestors—silent, embalmed,

waiting on chairs of gold for the resurrection. The king prays to his great father the Sun, and returns to the street; the high priest kills the sacrifice and examines its entrails. For three days no fire has been burning in the whole land, but now, focussing sun-light on cotton, the high priest rekindles the sacred fire. The sacrifice is brought to the altar and burned, that the Sun may consume its smoke. Many other sacrifices are slain, and the king and the nobles and people receive parts of them. An image of god, "made of seeds and the grain of the country and mixed with the blood of virgins and children," is received by the people "with singular silence and devotion." This they eat, and drink wine with it. "That which is most admirable in the hatred and presumption of Satan is that he not only counterfeited in idolatry and sacrifices, but also in certain ceremonies, our sacraments, which Jesus Christ our Lord instituted, and the holy Church uses, having especially pretended to imitate, in some sort, the sacrament of the communion, which is the most high and divine of all others"—so says Father Acosta, one of those priests who, moved by zeal for "*our holy religion*," endeavoured to introduce into South America that religion of love which in Spain burned its heretics, its Moors, and its Jews, as well as expelled the latter in such a manner that many of them died of starvation before reaching the shores of another country—thus providing that God's will be done on earth as it is in hell.<sup>1</sup>

I have done with the Communion, but there are one or two things connected with the Crucifixion that I must still refer to.

The instances are very numerous in which nature sympathises with men's fate: when Cæsar died the sheeted dead did gibber in the streets of Rome—at least Shakespeare says so, but he lived rather a long time after the event. I think you will scarcely be angry if I treat the earthquake and the opening of the graves and the rising of saints at the time of Jesus' death as poetic scenery, comparable to the "storm continues" that accompanies the passionate raving of a Shakespearean tragedy. Palestine in the time of "Our Lord" was not a country about which we know nothing—it is not at that time a barbarous or prehistoric land, without any literature of its

<sup>1</sup> I have used Prescott's "Conquest of Peru" and "Conquest of Mexico," with corrections supplied by later investigations.



own, and unknown to other nations. It belonged to the Empire of Rome and was ruled by Herod, not a Jew by birth, and most unpopular among the Jews, yet no one, except the author of the gospel according to St Matthew, ever tells us that he once ordered the massacre of all the children in Bethlehem. Why did not the Jews appeal to Rome?<sup>1</sup> Did it never occur to you that if you and I both independently described an event we probably should not use exactly the same words? There are at least twenty-six passages in the first three gospels which *verbally coincide* in all three of them. On the other hand, there are passages where they contradict one another. But I am not a literary critic. It is well known that the gospels do not agree about Jesus' appearances after his resurrection. He appears to me to have reappeared as a ghost or soul rather than as a resurrected body, because he still has the marks of wounds on him, and this, I believe, is mainly a peculiarity of ghosts—they look, and essentially remain, exactly as they were when they died. But, on the other hand, he says: "It is I myself . . . for a spirit has not flesh and bones."<sup>2</sup> He suddenly appears in the midst of a room as though he came through the wall.

The Phœnician god Adon<sup>3</sup> (adopted by the Greeks as Adonis) was slain by a boar. Every year the anniversary of his death was celebrated with bitter lamentations; his image was buried in the sea or in a spring; later (in most places on the following day) with great rejoicings his resurrection and ascension to heaven was celebrated. (Probably he was in early life a tree or vegetation god, who revived every spring.) At his festival plants were dipped into water; this, as well as his burial in water, is a rain charm: as the plants (in whom Adon dwells) and his image are made wet, so may other manifestations of him be wetted. Among the Hebrew ceremonies we have the feast of tabernacles, on which it is commanded that you shall take "the fruit of *goodly*<sup>4</sup> trees, branches of palm-trees, boughs of thick trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days."<sup>5</sup> Thus are the old tree gods made to serve their conqueror: for

<sup>1</sup> Davidson says: "The star (of the Magi) . . . the flight into Egypt, the slaughter of innocents . . . are unhistorical."

<sup>2</sup> St Luke xxiv. 36, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Adon = Lord.

<sup>4</sup> The translation is doubtful. It probably refers to a specific tree.

<sup>5</sup> Leviticus xxiv. 40.

myth changes, while customs remain. The whole history of religion is a struggle to reconcile new reason with old practice. At Jerusalem on tabernacles water was drawn from certain wells and poured over the altar and over the branches<sup>1</sup>: this is a rain charm, not commanded in the Bible, but a very celebrated and joyous occasion to the Jews.

Again, in Egypt men mourned for Osiris on the anniversary of his death, and soon after rejoiced at his resurrection; and for Dionysus (another vegetation god, though particularly the spirit of the grape) in Greece. Plutarch comforts his wife after the death of their daughter by referring to the resurrection of Dionysus. (Plutarch *Consol: ad uxor: io.*)<sup>2</sup>

It is only with great reluctance that I go any further. Many people say: "With us religion has nothing to do with thought or reason or argument: it is connected with the inmost feelings of our being—without it the consolations, the feelings, of life would cease—we should become like the brutes." It is useless for such people—who are not likely to have even read so far as this—but no: it shall never be said that I denied the hospitality of my pages to anyone, anyone who could pay to read them. Only, I do not think that false feelings and false ideas can help anyone to live rightly. Many have wearisome and dull lives: religion might be an imaginative recreation to them, giving them dreams and a false feeling of importance, but is it true that in our day the heavily burdened are religious?

Most savages believe that animals as well as men live again after death. The truth is that they do not understand that death exists: destruction is an incomprehensible idea to anyone, and change of state, of condition, rearrangement of atoms, dissolution from a coherent, organic whole, composed of numerous highly-specialised parts, into an incoherent series of homogeneous parts—what would these things mean to savages? None of the ordinary tests for death, doctors say, can conclusively prove that it has taken place: a man may, even to trained observers, appear dead and yet not be dead. A man sleeps, or is in an intensely rigid trance, or is unconscious, and he yet revives. Hence the most barbarous savages, supposing death to be a longer sleep or trance, from which there will be an awakening, put their dead

<sup>1</sup> I am a little uncertain what it was poured over, but the precise details do not matter here.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer,

where they cannot be hurt—on the top of trees, for example. Some keep the bones of animals carefully in order that they may return to life. A certain sinew of the leg is eaten neither by the Jews nor by the American Indians: each have a story—one about Jacob and an angel and the other about two giants and an Indian—to explain why it is not eaten, but the real reason is because in ancient times one part of the body was considered necessary as a foundation for the reconstruction of the body at the time of resurrection, when all the former parts of the creature will be again collected together. Other people suppose a certain bone to be essential. In the Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers" (perhaps the oldest story known to us) the heart of Bata is preserved after his death; on placing the heart in water and making him drink the water he returns to life four years after his death.

But what is the soul or spirit or other self, without which the body cannot live?

Metaphysicians and theologians, by eternally piling an elephant on a tortoise and a tortoise on a serpent and yet leaving the serpent to rest on nothing, have made the whole subject distasteful to me in the highest degree. If I read all that has been written by all Christian authors, and asked all the pious Christians I know to explain to me what they think about the life to come, do you suppose I could ever give anyone any account of it?

I do not believe that any *nation* ever did agree about this subject. And yet, if Christianity were dead, I should be expected to state what its opinion was as to the future life. Consequently, I partly disclaim responsibility for my remarks about people's *beliefs* concerning the soul and its life after death, as so much depends on etymological opinion as to the meaning of different words (spirit, breath of life, and so on) and on individual informants.

Many savages bury or burn slaves, horses, weapons, dogs, fish hooks, clothing, and so on, for the use of their dead. Many savage languages call the soul a *shadow* (shade). It is that which appears in *dreams*; it is a ghost (or alien soul), that sometimes forces them to act against their will; it is that which travels away when we are asleep. Carens and Papuas identify soul with blood; Greenlanders say man has two souls—his breath and his shadow; in innumerable languages, including Hebrew, the word for breath means soul also. Innumerable people think men

have several souls—one goes away when we sleep, but then another must stay to receive the dream soul, unless the soul whose departure causes sleep visits the dream soul and is received by it. In Egypt it is said only one soul was supposed to go to the land of the dead. The Egyptian had four souls — ba, akh, ka, and khaba, translated by Dr Birch as soul, mind, image, shade. The Chinese and Greeks have three souls (at least this seems the orthodox Greek idea—*nous*, *psyche*, *pneuma*)—but, according to Aristotle, to take one exception, man has six souls. In Fiji a fat man may sometimes be seen lying on the ground calling out for his soul—one soul being supposed absent whenever you feel unwell.

In Hebrew it is clear that the soul is mainly identified with the breath. There are three names for it—*ruach*, *naphesh*, *nischema*—but they all denote the one soul (or spirit) in the three conditions in which it is supposed to exist. *Ruach* is the soul or breath without a body; *naphesh* is the invisible bond of soul and body, which can die, be killed, be virtuous, and be loosened by disease; and *nischema* is the visibly-acting person, body and soul. But blood is also spoken of as the life; probably it is in the blood that the marriage of soul and body takes place, so that to spill blood is to kill, to divide body from soul. "The soul of the flesh is in the blood,"<sup>1</sup>—that is, the soul is not the blood—but the blood especially is the local "habitation" of the soul, it is its visible dwelling-place. Hence the blood of the sacrifices is their essence.<sup>2</sup>

Ezekiel thinks the wind, breath, and spirit are all one:—please remember that in Hebrew one word is used for breath and wind, and look at these verses:—

"Thus saith the Lord God:—

Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

So I prophesied, as he commanded me, and the breath came into them" (that is, into the dry bones), "and they lived, and stood up upon their feet."<sup>3</sup>

Some people have supposed the soul to look like a bird.

<sup>1</sup> Leviticus xvii. 11. Authorised Version has "life" for "soul," but, in Hebrew, life, breath, soul, can be all expressed by one word.

<sup>2</sup> "Real-Encyclopädie für Bibel und Talmud," edited by J. Hambrüger.

<sup>3</sup> Ezekiel xxxvii. 9, 10.

It is a mistake to suppose that death leads to a land whence no traveller returns. So long as you do not eat with the dead it seems possible to go to them and to come back. Persephone (but she is a myth), a New Zealand savage lady, a North American Sioux, saw a little of the under world or of the glorious life of the blessed and the hideous punishments of the unhappy, yet came back to the upper world, or to the hut of the dead, or to the funeral scaffold. In the Vancouver Islands the aristocracy or best people go to heaven and the common people to hell (for the sake of simplicity, I shall refer to the happy land as heaven and the bad land as hell, however diverse tastes in happiness and torture may be); among the Ahts great chiefs and warriors go up, and low people go down to a land where the blankets are too thin and your feet are cold and you shiver all night. The Persian meets a lovely lady in heaven, who tells him that she is his good thoughts, his good deeds, his good words. In the first night he receives as much joy as all the living possess. The wicked man meets an ugly woman, who explains who she is—his bad thoughts, bad deeds, bad words. Ama-Mainyu orders for him poison, and food mixed with poison, due to them who follow the evil law, and think, speak, and do evil.

The other world is situated just where you would expect it to be; so that you can just see it, but cannot go there. It is on a mountain that no one can or dare climb up: it is below, and a cave or a volcano leads down to it: you go to the end of the earth and climb on to the sky to reach it, or go eastwards to the land from which the sun starts every morning: Or sometimes it is in the sun.

When we know a little about the mythologies of other peoples, and read the earlier (Hebrew) parts of the Bible without prejudice, it is fairly plain that the land of the dead, Sheol, is a Hades—an under world, where men and things are as they are here, but where everything is colourless, dull, languid, monotonous—the sun is not visible, the sky is only the heavy bottom of our earth floor, men and women are languid and tired—it is like a bad photograph of our world: everything is dull, grey, hard looking. “The dead praise not the Lord nor any that go down into silence.” “There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the under world whither thou goest.” This, at least, is my impression: I admit the words “the dead” may sometimes mean “the spiritually dead.”

Hezekiah (in chapter xxxviii. of Isaiah) seems to believe that there is no future life. The Revised Version should be read, as the Authorised Version is incomprehensible.

The passages in the Apocryphal "Wisdom of Solomon" (written about B.C. 100 by a Jew living among Greeks), in which, perhaps for the first time in Jewish writings, the doctrine of reward and punishment in the future life appears, are well known, but I think I ought perhaps to make a quotation:—

"As for the mysteries of God (the wicked) knew them not; neither hoped they for the wages of righteousness, nor discerned a reward for blameless souls. For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world: and they that do hold of his side, do find it. But the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they *seemed* to die, and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace. For, though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality, and having been a little chastised" (on earth) "they shall be greatly rewarded" (in heaven): "for God proved them, and found them worthy for himself." . . . "But the ungodly shall be punished according to their own imaginations, which has neglected the righteous and forsaken the Lord. . . . If they die quickly, they have no hope, nor comfort in the day of hearing" (or judgment) "for horrible is the end of the unrighteous generation."<sup>1</sup> And, later on, the righteous man stands "in great boldness" before the wicked, who is astonished at the strangeness of his salvation, and repents and groans and says:

"We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour: now is he numbered among the children of God and his lot among the saints! What has pride profited us? Or what good has riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow—as when a bird has flown through the air—and afterwards no sign in the air is to be found where she went. . . . But the righteous live for ever, . . . they receive a glorious kingdom and a beautiful crown."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Wisdom of Solomon," ii, 22 to end of iii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, v.

There you have heaven and hell: "flavour according to taste," as the cookery books say, according to *national* taste, and it does for any mythology or religion which has developed to the right degree. The early lands of the dead are not moral,—there is only one land for sheep and goats:—sometimes there then develops an upper and lower world for the brave or strong and the weak or cowardly, and after that God gives joy to the righteous according to his righteousness, and evil to the wicked according to his wickedness.

In Scandinavian mythology Hela rules over Niflheim, —a land of freezing fog<sup>1</sup> and uncomfortable sights: her courtyard is faintness, her threshold precipice; her hall is pain, her table hunger, her knife starvation; her manservant delay, her maid slowness; her bed is sickness, her pillow anguish, her canopy curse. Below her house is a cellar called Nastrond. Its walls are serpents "wattled together like wicker work, with heads turning inwards, vomiting poison." Swimming and wading in this venom are the worst of the damned. As for Valhalla, the home of Odin, who can praise it? The Valkyrs, mounted on horses, surrounded by lightning, with swords of flame, dripping with the blood of their enemies, these beautiful women lead those slain in battle upwards towards it. There the heroes fight every day; every evening the often-killed dead awake, the wounds are healed: they eat the boar Schrimnir, cooked by Andrimnir, and the white clad Valkyrs offer the wine cups; delicious is the food, when God sits at the table. In the halls of the goddesses, in Gefjone and Vingolf, are the noble women. Every night they feast, and every night the boar Schrimnir returns to table.

At last the day arrives, the day that is neither day nor night, the day of the twilight of the gods,<sup>2</sup> the day when the wolf Sköll devours the sun, a day when the Aesir and the Jötuns fight together, the dwellers in Valhalla against the dwellers in Hela, and the gods against the demons:—they fight until from the upper heavens awakes the great Father, the All-Powerful,—He who is too great to often interfere with the rule of the universe,—and he makes a new heaven and a new earth, and pain and sorrows flee away,—he wipes away the blood and tears from all faces.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Niflheim = home of fog.

<sup>2</sup> Ragnarökur.

<sup>3</sup> W. R. Alger: "A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future

This languid Supreme God seems to exist in many mythologies ; disputes about the belief in his existence in different lands are not unusual in books on religions and folk-lore : I should suspect that the more intelligent will often tend towards a faith in such a being, who is raised above the incoherent members of a pantheon.

I have forgotten to mention one New Testament miracle, the turning of water into wine.

"It seemed to Pausanias, the historian, that the wickedness of the world had brought it to pass, that times were no longer as of old, when Lykaon was turned into a wolf and Niobe into a stone, when men still sat as guests at the table of the gods and were raised like Herakles to become gods themselves."

Then again I was obliged to deal with the immaculate conception near the beginning of my remarks, before I had explained enough to enable me to say what I wished. With many savages, at puberty, girls are considered to be holy or unclean—that is, a spirit or power is acting in them, and so manifesting itself. Some peoples shut the girls up for years, so that their feet shall not touch the earth nor the sun shine on them. (Most of my readers will no doubt object greatly to my merging the unclean and the holy together : but to an early mind a power is a power before it is known whether god or demon. Of course, the Christian is always in the centre of his mind classifying everyone as a goat or a sheep, so he finds it hard to understand that it is an earlier idea merely to see whether they please or do not please you, whether they hurt you or are kind to you. Now, what hurts is pre-eminently powerful.)

Now, if you have ever been out in the blazing sun with no clothes on you, you may understand why it probably is that the sun must not be allowed to touch girls at this period ; you will know that decided sexual sensations are produced by the sun's heat on a naked or almost naked body. Savages think that it would not do to let the sacred sun thus spend his strength by cohabiting with the girl or acting in unison with the spirit possessing her. It is my opinion that many of the sons of virgins are descended (derived) from the idea of children of the sun.

But very savage people have no conception of paternity, Life." Whether the wicked are punished for ever is not known. (Alger is not reliable. Indeed, he wrote in an age of primitive folk-lore—*i.e.* in 1878.)



of the cause of birth ; they suppose that if a woman eats some seed, fruit, or fish, or touches special pools or sacred wells or vapours, she may afterwards have a child without any further operation.

Now about the Trinity. Of course, the Holy Ghost is common enough in the Old Testament, only it is called "the Spirit of God," "the Spirit of the Lord," "the divine Spirit," and so on ; it is invented to avoid one puzzling difficulty that arises in a purely spiritual monotheism. If God is *everywhere* and yet is *not* any of the material things that we see, nor any of the souls of men (and it is a heresy to say that the soul is an actual part of God, though some people have thought so), how can he do it, and how can he ever go to and act on the universe that we know? Two things cannot occupy the same space. So God makes the Spirit of God, and it (being more solid probably than He is) can do what he cannot. The Son of God is not, I think, a very common expression in the Old Testament, and need I remark that it nearly always means man? We are all the children of one God ; and we read, "Is not Israel my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased?" and so on. The revisers of the older Hebrew writings, who left the Old Testament as we now have it, and tried above everything to make Israel believe in one God, may have been careless sometimes and left (in Genesis) remarks about the sons of God who came down to the daughters of men : but as a general rule they certainly did not leave open references to any divinity except Yahveh, and did not foresee that their figurative expressions would be understood literally.

There are said to be three gods in one person in India :

"In those three persons the one God was shown  
Each first in place—each last not one alone ;  
Of Sivâ, Vishnu, Brahma each may be."

And :

"The heart (or life) of Sivâ is Vishnu, and the heart  
(life) of Vishnu is Sivâ."

Again :

"Ra is the soul of Osiris, and Osiris is the soul of Ra."<sup>1</sup>

Considering how many souls are supposed by many

<sup>1</sup> Renouf's "Religions of Ancient Egypt."

nations to dwell in one man, the matter ought not to seem difficult.

The position too of mediator held by the God-descended son has answering positions elsewhere. Among the Fijian gods "Tokairambe and Tui Lakemba Randinandina seem to stand next to Nolengei, being his sons, and acting as mediators by transmitting the prayers of suppliants to their father."<sup>1</sup>

Now having done all I intend to do with the New Testament, I think I could be less dull if we turned to a few Old Testament stories and miracles. Having come so far, I had better be as thorough as possible.

Turn first to Judges xiii.: the story of Samson. An angel appears to Manoah's wife; the angel in those days looked just like an ordinary man, but, of course, refused to reveal his name (18). He announces that Manoah's son will be a holy (tabooed) man; it will be dangerous for his mother to come into contact with any supernatural powers, such as wine (the spirit of which "possesses" a man and overrules his proper self), or to touch "unclean" powerful animals, for her son will be devoted to God, to an opposition power.

Now the strength of Samson is in his hair. "In Ceram men do not cut their hair: if married men did so they would lose their wives; if young men did so they would grow weak and enervated."<sup>2</sup> The hair being in contact with the head, the most sacred part, is particularly sacred. A man's soul or strength is often supposed to reside in something outside him or in some particular part of him. He may keep his soul in a box or in an egg which is in a duck which is in a hare which is in a casket which is under an oak: and if that box or egg is broken he will, of course, die: or his strength may be in his hair, and if that hair is cut he will, of course, be weak. The natives of Amboina keep their strength in their hair.

In many Australian tribes the men keep their lives in bats, and the women in nightjars; but savage tribes now often keep their lives in particular kinds of animals: whenever one of these animals is killed the man or woman dies whose soul or life was in the animal. If a man's life be in a bird, and the right wing of the bird he pulled off, his right arm falls off; if the left wing goes, his left arm is

<sup>1</sup> Herbert Spencer's "Principles of Sociology."

<sup>2</sup> Frazer, vol. i. p. 194 (1890 ed.).

destroyed ; if the bird is crushed he becomes faint. Samson kept only his strength in his hair : "if I be shaven then my strength will go," he said. Some men, having many souls, (let us say three or seven) keep some of them outside themselves in order to have many chances of escaping death. But if any one soul be killed, either (let us suppose) the soul that is in the man's heart, that which is in his hair, or that which is in a certain bat, the man will be much weakened. If the soul is the life, seeing that a man may become stronger and weaker, more or less healthy and injured, more or less alive, it seems to me that this idea of many souls in different places is reasonable : out of this conception, when the original essence of the idea had been lost, and was contrary to men's views of life, arose the tale of a Samson. It is most probable that in ancient Europe the oak kept its life in the mistletoe, which is ever green, even though the oak itself be dead during the winter, and which is also safely placed not touching the earth and shaded from the sun,<sup>1</sup>—a good place therefore in which to put your soul.

Now turn to chapter vi. of the second book of Samuel. David is taking the ark of God home "on a new cart." "Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it ; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah ; and God smote him there for his error ; and there he died by the ark of God." David was not pleased at this ; but the ark was, of course, God's personal property, and very holy, infected with destructive power. God says so : "the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it : but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die" (Numbers iv. 15). Now once some little children said to Elisha : "Go up, bald head ! bald head." It was very vexing ; and Elisha cursed them "in the name of the Lord." And two she-bears came out of the wood and tore forty-two of the children. This shows how useful it is to know how to curse in the name of the Lord. But I do think that Elisha was a little hasty.

Oh !—and Elijah went up to heaven in a chariot of fire : this looks as though heaven was up there, and I said the ancient Jews had only a dull underground Hades. Well, who ever heard of a mythology that was consistent ? As I say, no two Christians agree now about the future world,

<sup>1</sup> This excellent suggestion is one of the final deductions in Frazer's "Golden Bough."

at least, the Pope and an ignorant but devout Italian peasant would most probably not agree, nor the Italian peasant with the Archbishop of York. (These names, the Pope, the peasant, and the bishop, are purely symbolical ; I do not wish to offend the Pope.)

Now look at chapter xvi. of Numbers. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and 250 other princes, rebel against Moses. Moses orders them to bring censers full of incense and to stand at the door of the tabernacle. "The glory of the Lord" (is this his rays of light?) appears, and orders all the people to stand away from the three rebels and their followers. The three leaders are then swallowed up by the earth, which opens its mouth beneath their feet. A fire *comes out from the Lord* and burns the 250 minor rebels, and then, "let the censers of these sinners make broad plates for a covering for the altar ; for they offered them before the Lord, therefore they are hallowed . . . to be a remembrance to the children of Israel (showing them) that no stranger which is not of the seed of Aaron can come near to offer incense before the Lord, that he be not as Korah and as his company." This incident illustrates exactly the nature of "holiness" ; the censers are made holy by coming near to the tabernacle, it would not be safe to use them except for God's altar ; the rebels come near to the holy tabernacle and to holy God, they are burned and swallowed up ; the seed of Aaron are sanctified (or made holy) by being sprinkled with blood and with oil, the blood and oil being also placed on and round the altar, so that there is "a covenant" between Aaron and altar, and again by the priests' waving certain food before the Lord (who probably eats the essence or smell of the food as it passes) and then themselves eating the hallowed parts that remain of it<sup>1</sup> :—I say that Aaron and his seed are in these ways "vaccinated" and can safely go into the holy places.

I am getting sated with the miraculous. Just one more, and quite a small miracle, and then we will leave off.

Open any guide-book and you are quite likely to read something like this :

"This village is popularly supposed to be called —, because it is —. This is, however, a complete error. The name is really derived from the Anglo-Saxon words

<sup>1</sup> Leviticus viii.

— and —. Stowe in his chronicle says : —” and so forth.

Or something like this :

“The picturesque and Early English church is oddly situated on the summit of — hill. There is a silly tradition that the church was begun in a more convenient and accessible site, but that the devil always removed at night the materials used during the day and placed them on the hill, so that the inhabitants might not be able to worship during inclement winters. The fact is that until 1216 the village itself was situated on the hill, being fortified by a rampart and a ditch, of which the grass-covered remains may still be recognised.”

“When the real reason for a given fact,” or the true origin of a name, “is unknown or forgotten, in certain stages of culture a story arises attributing it to a supernatural origin.”<sup>1</sup>

Why are some waters called Marah (bitter) when they are not bitter? Oh, they used to be bitter, and Moses healed them. Early peoples and uneducated people have no books, no etymological dictionaries, no British Museum reading-rooms; you must either guess an explanation or do without one. And what Moses could do with a tree, Elijah could do with salt. Elijah being a popular man, and only thirteen stories having ever been invented (according to Balzac, or is it six?), all the others are variations, combinations.

Now, if I were you, I would not believe one word of this. I am only a lazy fellow, who has been copying out of other people's books. Look for yourself; I daresay you will find some mistakes in what I have said. And if you find a single mistake, of course you will know that I only wished to mislead you. I have written very badly; I did not wish to be too dull, and so I only gave you a skeleton of what could be done; I left out all the evidence. Then, too, I heard Mr Grundy talking and it confused me. “I never saw such stuff. It's all about a lot of savages whom I never heard of” (as though the savages had heard of Mr Grundy, and yet he wears a high hat), “and a lot of idiotic idols, whose names no one can pronounce; and (can you believe it?) the man actually has the impudence to talk about the

<sup>1</sup> E. S. Hartland, F.S.A., “Folk-Lore: What is it?” etc.

doings of our Saviour and then about these—about these heathenish idols. I do not know what he means. And here's a man says some idol ought to have its name spelled, not as this fellow says, all in one word, but in—you see it all in the *Christian's Weekly*. Now that just shows you. So you just see that he's nothing better than (I must use the word)—he is nothing better than a liar—an utterly dissolute atheist; as though all the world—but, Maria, how can you let the book lie about for all the children to see? and, perhaps, someone will call who knows what it is, and his intention, aim, and purpose is only to deceive, to delude, to debauch."

Who can write well when this kind of noise is being made?

Then there's a lady who says: "It's so unpoetical. I should be sorry to live in such a cold, dull world. These people make everything uncertain. And if you begin to doubt, where will you end? I never knew anyone who did not go to church and who was really good." (The lady is about twenty years old and has gained a large experience of the world by attending the sales at London shops and by visiting the drawing-rooms of really nice people.)

But, do you know, I do not agree with you. I do not mean that you are not good, although you go to church (I have sometimes been to your church myself; the light is very becoming to your face where you sit); but I mean this: You know the Bible says that the world was made in six days, but Darwin and the geologists cannot say how many million years were needed for the hot surface of the earth to cool enough to allow any plant to be generated on it, for plant life to develop into animal life, for animals to advance through all the series of fossils of different periods, through all the wide animal kingdom up to man. Your holy writings say that the ark of God was taken to battle with the children of Israel when they went against their enemies; and that (probably to amuse God) David danced and people shouted and blew trumpets before it, and that David said "I will play before it," when he was rebuked for his action.<sup>1</sup> You say that God had a Son and that that Son lived on earth with men; your writings say that God, being angry with Israel, caused David to sin, to say: "Go, number Israel and Judah," and then David repented, and God punished all Israel with a pestilence—and this a book

<sup>1</sup> 2 Samuel vi.

written to justify the ways of God to men.<sup>1</sup> They say that God commanded Israel to destroy all the women and children and cattle of the nations whom they drove out of Palestine. I am not sure that any people known to us have ever acted so cruelly; and, on the contrary, I say almost with the author of the magnificent book of Job: "I go forward, but I cannot find the ultimate cause; and backward, but I cannot find a beginning; on the left, where are the works of a reality, but what can I know of it? These five senses of mine, they limit the possible extent of my knowledge; the essential nature of anything must be unknown to me, for only by its effects on my obviously limited body can I know it."

"But then," says another lady, "Ruskin says the Bible is well written, and you think it is nonsense."

"I did not say it was nonsense. To quote a friend of mine, I said scientific investigation of history shows that many events recorded in it never took place. I should be very glad if people read the Bible only because it amused them, because it was well written. But if they looked at it without prejudice, would they think *all* of it well written? The fact is that the pious reader at present usually thinks most of the Bible has no meaning at all. I have tried to help him to see that he is wrong. He usually reads it without knowing what it means, but supposing the meaning to be too holy or sacred to be safely thought about. Myself, I think the narrative parts of the first three gospels are very badly written, and the teaching of Jesus, which is, of course, well expressed, is totally inapplicable to life. Isaiah, Job and Ecclesiastes (two early agnostic books), I think these magnificent. Everyone who can admire that simplicity of style, that absence of art, which needs so much art, admires parts of the books of Moses and the Lamentations of Jeremiah. I may be wrong, but I think most of the Psalms are overrated and inflated; but I am not a judge of poetry. Matthew Arnold liked the book of Proverbs, but it is not a book for when you feel tired. A friend of mine likes the Song of Songs, but I cannot understand it. These remarks are of no value to anyone, but they are in the right spirit.

"Well," says another lady, "I like my religion because of its associations. I know that miracles never did happen. But it is inexpressibly comforting to me to go to that communion to which my parents took me in their pious love,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Samuel xxiv.

and to feel myself connected with that great man who once offered up his life for us. I should wish any daughter of mine to be married in that church, which is dear to us because of so many memories. I should not like to desert that sacred cause which has outlived so many storms; after death, may we not hope to be again joined to that great Master, to hear His voice saying to us: 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant'?"

Oh!—A door must be either open or shut.

Most English people care less for symbolism than I do. So long as a symbol is a symbol of what we reasonably feel I would like to retain it. But otherwise, if it is to any degree whatever a charm or a memorial of a lie, it must go.

So long as we attach no supernatural meaning to it, may we not feel ourselves to be bound to each other after we have eaten together from one dish that is shared with goodwill, where the bread and salt are given with welcome and are received with welcome, one joy of friendship being felt by all? What more reasonable than that those who are to live in intimate connection with one another should publicly drink from one cup, should stand together covered by one cloak, or (to be more Oriental) should both be honoured in their time of joy by one protecting canopy? A more passionate bridegroom may wish to break a glass into fragments in token that he would have it be thus with him if ever he forsake his wife.<sup>1</sup> To look for the last time at those whom we loved, to see and honour, when the earth, the fire, the air, the living animals, the sea, take again and transform into higher or lower, more or less conscious and organic forms, the last remains of what was once a connected series of self-conscious movements, a man,—men always will do so. Ceremony is visible poetry. But, as a matter of fact, with savages and Englishmen, it is "good form" to have no feelings. English manners are mainly concerned with eating properly—an important matter, which has no emotional meanings.

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand perish." It is such feelings as these, human and sincere, that make the force of religion; and I have not said anything about them. I do believe that in our time the Christian no longer supposes himself to have advanced so

<sup>1</sup> I should like to know more about the history of this custom. It is done by Jews and, according to Victor Hugo, by gypsies. (See "Notre Dame.")



far beyond the Jew, and the Jew no longer looks down so much on the ignorant Christian; the Mohammedan finds that some Christians have many virtues; and the Buddhist learns that the king who went out from a palace and forsook all in order to find the cure for illness and for old age and death and miserable beggary was not the only man whom we may well admire; and all of them may come to see that it is not better to believe than to allow people to dare to think.

Too often as with our patriotism, so with our religion :—

“Turks deride us, we them; Italians Frenchmen, accounting them light-headed fellows; the French scoff again at Italians, and at their several customs; Greeks have condemned all the world but themselves of barbarism, the world as much vilifies them now; we account Germans heavy, dull fellows, explode many of their fashions; they as contemptibly think of us; Spaniards laugh at all, and all again at them. So are we fools and ridiculous, absurd in our actions, carriages, diet, apparel, customs, and consultations; we scoff and point at one another, when as in conclusion all are fools, ‘and they the veriest asses that hide their ears most.’ A private man if he be resolved with himself, or set on an opinion, accounts all idiots and asses that are not affected as he is—*nil rectum, nisi quod placuit sibi, ducit*, that are not so minded (*quodque volunt homines se bene velle putant*) all fools that think not as he doth: he will not say with Atticus, *suam quisque sponsam, mihi meam*, let every man enjoy his own spouse; but his alone is fair, *suus amor*, etc., and scorns all in respect of himself, will imitate none, hear none but himself, as Pliny said, a law and example to himself.”

---

#### NOTE ON REASONABLE SYMBOLISM AND THE BREAKING OF A GLASS AT WEDDINGS

THOSE who have studied European literature may agree with me that in the secret depths of the English character there is a certain mysticism. To some extent, no doubt, it is only the hazy acceptance by practical men of any theory that lies near at hand and saves abstract thought. This hardly accounts, however, for the very definite

differences between the poetry of England and the poetry of Germany—differences which by some are supposed to be mainly due to the Celtic elements of the varied and complex English nation. Could this mysticism be expressed in reasonable forms it might remove the colourless dulness of English life. It is, however, to be feared that what I have termed practicalness is intimately connected with a certain cowardice of the imagination that prevents the Englishman from trying to examine his best loved dreams or to realise them. The ideal is not the untrue, but the truth generalised, simplified. If the ideal cannot always be carried into practice it should often be possible to translate it into symbolism, which is the theory of actual practice, the mathematical formula for it, separated from all accidental and disturbing circumstances.

The breaking of a glass at a wedding has been explained thus :

(1) As a curse. I have mentioned this explanation—so be it with the bridegroom if he forsake the bride.

(2) As a symbol of the frailty of human life: eat, marry and be merry, but remember to-morrow.

(3) As an imitation of misfortune—as when Polycrates, being too fortunate, threw a valuable ring into the sea. The demons or God envy the happy. The Germans say “*unberufen*” after having boasted of good fortune. We throw rice over “the happy couple” lest their bird-like souls should be tempted by envious demons to fly away from them.

(4) Lastly, in Jewish weddings, it has been supposed to mean: “Even in moments of joy we are mourners for Zion,” just as the Oriental mourner rends (or breaks) his garments. This is certainly not the original meaning, because it would only apply to Jews. The rending of garments, although it looks like the imitation of those violent actions inevitably caused by the sudden generation of nervous energy through a great emotional shock, is more likely to be a frugal survival of the former custom of throwing away or destroying everything that came into contact with the holy or unclean supernatural power that causes death. (See Israel Abrahams’ “*Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*.”)

## II

“I tried to explain to him that he thought himself wise, but was not really wise; and the consequence was that he hated me.”—PLATO.

Now let us see whether man is much separated from lower animals or whether there is a gradual progress from one form of matter to another, a transition from mineral to plant, from plant to animal, from instinct to reason. Where matter seems most inert, an infinite number of moving molecules can now be almost proved to exist: their motions are influenced by heat waves (causing expansion and contraction), and influence light waves (causing in us sensations

of colour), and are acted on through immeasurable space by other molecules of a like nature (as spectral analysis informs us). The molecules are made up of atoms, and when one molecule acts on another the atoms are re-arranged. Matter, then (which, apart from all distinguishing qualities, is an unknowable abstraction), is always found combined with motion (which by itself is also an inconceivable abstraction): in other words, force or motion is a *quality* of matter and of ether (if ether exists). Chemistry and gravity both seem to show us that each portion of matter has an affinity for other matter which is of the same order of motion: by the uniting of their two forces, a third force, such as electricity, heat or light is set into action. To take the simplest example: two bodies attract one another (or, we usually say, a body falls), and the forces (probably in reality, electrical or magnetic) which caused them to attract one another are mainly changed into those molecular movements called heat.

In just the same way in the next higher arrangement of matter (none of which is truly motionless), pairs of forces generate third forces in such a manner as to enable a plant to absorb what is needed for the growth of its organs. The light waves, the moving atoms composing the protoplasm of the plant and composing the soil at its roots, these are some of the forces concerned. I suppose the formation of a chemical compound from elements which do not seem to resemble it must give us a smaller analogy for the formation of living cells from elements which have none of their qualities.<sup>1</sup>

Now, in the lowest animals any part of the surface is capable of enclosing and dissolving food with which it comes into contact. In answer to an external force, the animal seems to be only capable of contractions.

Before attempting a slight sketch of the origin of nerves, I will explain that all the senses of animals are specialised forms of the sense of touch. In the cases of smell and taste, small particles of matter come into *contact* with specially sensitive surfaces; in hearing, waves of sound produce vibrations by *touching* a special apparatus; and the light waves of the ether, made to converge by the coming into *contact* with lenses of the eyes, also transfer their vibrations onwards through nerves.

Imagine on the surface of a very lowly developed, almost

<sup>1</sup> From this point, my information in Section II. is nearly all taken from Herbert Spencer's "Principles of Psychology."

homogeneous creature, a spot containing more colouring-matter than do other parts of the surface. (Such variations occur in all creatures.) This colouring-matter is acted on by light, as it is in plants. Hence there will be a disturbance within the creature, caused by this particularly sensitive patch. In order to balance within the creature a line of action so set up, an equal and opposing line of action must meet it. By repeated action, the vague paths along which these actions flow change into definite channels, situated where there is least resistance,—just as flowing water gradually finds a definite course: these definite channels increase the action, and by increased and repeated action the tissues conveying it are further modified so as to offer less resistance. Hence the amount of force conveyed, and the improvement of the structure fitted to convey it, reciprocally increase one another. Both assist in the overthrow of any obstacles that impede the wave of movement. Those modified tissues which offer less resistance than the rest of the creature to contractions, are incipient nerves. Incipient sight is an “anticipatory touch” caused by variation in the amount of light falling on a particular part. It merges into and is always followed by touch and decided contraction. As the nervous system develops (and I shall a little further on try to make this development a little clearer) large or small bodies are distinguished by large or small shocks of nervous system, causing tension and seizure of prey or sudden retreat, just as with us small nervous shocks brace the nerves, and large ones cause convulsive contortions.

Such a shock, a change in the environment occasioning a change in the creature, is termed a “reflex action.” Reflex actions, of course, are not accompanied by consciousness, to which I have not yet referred. Reflex action occurs as soon as the first component part of a nervous system exists—as soon as there is a nervous centre connecting the nerves, one of which (the afferent nerve) conveys a movement from periphery to centre, and the other (the efferent nerve) an answering movement from the centre to another surface. In their completed development, nerves are (to speak very inexactly) threads which are enclosed by protecting cells and protecting fibres: just as the electric wire is enclosed in insulating material to prevent its energy from leaking.<sup>1</sup> In a

<sup>1</sup> Nervous movements are supposed to be electrical: but this does not concern us here.

completed nervous system nerves are divided into two classes: those that convey the movements known as impressions from the skin, and from an internal organ or other surface; and those that convey motion to a muscle, gland, blood-vessel, or other movable part. The former nerves (as stated) are termed afferent and the latter efferent. The spinal column contains a series of nervous centres, which are automatic—that is, whenever one of the afferent nerves in this series is affected, the efferent nerve causes a movement—the whole transaction being unfelt, that is not directed by, nor *internally* presented to, consciousness.<sup>1</sup> If the higher nerve centres, of which I shall soon be speaking, have become disconnected from some of the lower spinal nerve-centres, the lower ones will continue to move limbs and organs situated in the disconnected part of the body. The movement outside the organism comes into contact with, and causes a movement in, the afferent nerve; from the afferent nerve the movement is conveyed to the efferent nerve, and thence to a muscle. Now, under certain circumstances, these movements in nerves become known subjectively as sensations. I have here slightly sketched the outline of the evolution of a nerve and of a reflex action: when there are many nerves in different parts of the body there will arise a series of reflex actions in a fixed succession.

For instance, a slight obscuring of the light that falls on the rudimentary visual nerve will cause an anticipatory touch or slight contraction: touch will follow, and decided contraction absorbing the food.<sup>2</sup> Such a group of reflex actions is termed an instinct. It will be to the advantage of the creature that such a series of actions should follow one another infallibly and quickly in answer to the external stimuli to which they correspond: natural selection will therefore modify its structure to this end, and the following arrangement is evolved:—Different nerve *centres* are interconnected, so that an external stimulus acts on an afferent nerve, and part of the force is transferred to the corresponding efferent nerve, while the rest starts action from another nerve-centre.

<sup>1</sup> I express myself in this way because the unfelt movement might, of course, be seen or heard.

<sup>2</sup> My explanations are highly inadequate, not only owing to brevity, but because they are generalised—that is, inapplicable to the history or actions of any single specific creature.

In higher animals the interconnections become very complex. Separate nerve-centres are connected with one another and with higher nerve-centres: the higher centres are interconnected, so that there is a centralisation and recentralisation that is carried far in proportion as the organisation is high. In the lowest animals any part of the surface is capable of enclosing and dissolving food with which it comes into contact. As we ascend in the scale of animals different parts become modified in different ways and more and more restricted to single functions. In the highest the most highly specialised and sensitive organs are developed in one small part of the body, and the rest of the surface does not correspond in any way with those stimuli whose percipient sense organs have been thus restricted in locality. These most specialised organs are in the most immediate connection with the brain. The brain is a complex group of higher nerve centres. The highest part of the nervous system in the most highly developed animals is therefore placed in immediate connection with the organs most needed for correspondence with the external world, and is made as independent as may be of the physical changes in the main parts of the body.

If the forces in the afferent and efferent nerves do not balance one another the surplus force conveyed to the highest nerve centre must set up some action in it. This action is one of the component parts of consciousness. Consciousness is the perception in the highest nerve centres of a series of simultaneous and successive, similar and dissimilar, nervous movements. Or rather, consciousness is the subjective side of what we see objectively as movements.

A sensation is the effect produced in consciousness by a stimulus acting on a nerve. For instance, waves of light, focussed by the eyes, cause the nerves to vibrate and produce in the visual centres the *sensations* of things seen.

I shall have to ask you to accept this explanation provisionally in order to follow my subsequent remarks, even if you are determined to ultimately reject it. Let us see what the consequences might be if what I have stated be true. As the senses improve, as the complex groups of reflex actions grow larger by corresponding to a larger number of external phenomena of different classes, instinct must at last develop to a stage where part of the external

aggregation of controlling objects occurs sufficiently seldom to give rise to nervous actions which have only feebly been connected with the rest of the group. Let us imagine two sets of objects, whose attributes may be symbolised thus :

a b c d e f L  
a b c d e f M

Let the effect of the attributes a b c d e f acting on the senses of a particular creature be to produce in it a series of reflex actions that we will term A. A we will suppose to be composed of actions which we symbolise as a' b' c' d' e' f'. But the entire first group of attributes produces a series of actions that we may term Ag', where g' is an action caused by the influence of the attribute L on the nerves of the creature. On the other hand, the second group of attributes produces a series of actions that we may term Ah', h' being an action interconnected at the nerve centre with the stimulus received from attribute M. Now, the series of actions called A has been repeated far more frequently than either g' or h'. Therefore the series A will follow the stimuli from a b c d e f quickly and easily. The nerve centre which produces A will be connected with both of the two nerve centres that produce the actions g' and h'. The attributes L and M will act on the nerves after and more slowly than a b c d e f act: consequently, after the actions termed A have occurred, there will be a pause, and the nerve centre producing A will slightly stimulate both the two centres which set g' and h' in action. No action will be produced, but only two faint forms of the nervous states (or nervous movements), which would (if carried further) accompany "motor" charges—that is, actual muscular movements.

This "faint form" is an idea. An idea is a feeble repetition of a nervous state which accompanies an action; the nervous state is the objective side of that which is perceived as an idea by the subject in which it arises. Let us suppose that you are reading "*to yourself*"—that is, you are not at all moving the muscles that produce articulation. But you are decidedly *fixing your attention* on the book, reading carefully. You will find that there is an internal speech proceeding in your mind; that part of the mind is acting which, if allowed to act a little more and to affect other nervous centres with which it had become closely connected, would cause articulate speech.

Ideas will first arise, then, when two conflicting higher nerve centres are both set into slight action but when neither of them actually causes a movement in the rest of the body. But if you consider the matter you will see that the faint forms are also *remembrances* of past actions. You will see, too, that the conflict between nascent opposing motor impulses gives rise to reason, as previously it gave rise to ideas and memory.

As the senses develop together with the nervous system, and some power of thinking, objects must at length be discriminated that have no connection with the needs of the organism. But the clustered properties of these objects have direct connections with one another of all degrees of constancy—that is, they recur more or less inseparably conjoined with one another; hence the psychical states produced in the organism by these properties have also direct connections with one another of all degrees of constancy—they have all degrees of the tendency to arouse one another. “Hence, of the impressions produced by adjacent objects during the movements of the organism, each is apt to make nascent certain other impressions with which it has been connected in experience—calls up ideas of such other impressions—that is, causes a remembrance of the attributes previously found in connection with the perceived attributes. Indeed, as intelligence increases, all sensations become associated into groups. Impressions of an object received through the eyes become associated with the impressions of it through touch; a consciousness of objects is gradually substituted for chaotic impressions; the successive movements and different views and different apparent sizes of a moving creature are associated with changed relations to a single continued existence.”

While reflex actions are being established impressions of quantities are associated in incipient memory with the actions that always followed them; and, again, when by the gradual approach of a creature reflex actions are partially and gradually excited, the incipient and continued excitement, not sufficient to be able to discharge itself in actual action, will excite faint images in nerve centres with which it has become closely connected: for instance, the approach of food will excite ideas of gustatory and tactual states, corresponding to what a more advanced intelligence would recognise as seizing and eating the prey.



Such a sensation (or real<sup>1</sup> presentation<sup>2</sup>) that is accompanied by associated faint ideas (or ideal<sup>3</sup> representations<sup>4</sup>) is termed a perception. In the mind of a man who has passed infancy there are few pure sensations. Thus things seen give to his consciousness ideas of shape, form, use, relative position, texture, solidity, relative distances—all these qualities are inferred. (All this is necessary for my argument. I wish to show that a mind, such as we have, can be developed from a very simple state of consciousness. Space and time are not, as has been asserted, intuitions of the spirit, but conceptions gradually derived from impressions.)

Complex groups of reflex actions lead, as I said, to memory. The qualities which are least perfectly connected with related actions, which are most slowly followed by the actions, and which are therefore most impressed in consciousness and most free to arouse associated ideas,—these become first impressed in memory. They have time to cause an amount of change in the nervous structure which renders the faint repetition of that change (or rather of the movement which constituted it) easier on a subsequent occasion.

As imperfect automatism in reflex actions lead to memory, so conversely does memory cease as automatic action is established. "The practised pianist can play while conversing with those around." Originally he had to *remember* the connection between the rather complex symbols on the music and the notes on the piano, the place on the piano where the required key lies, the actions needed to bring arm, hand, and finger to required position, the strength of muscular impulse needed for a blow of right strength, and the time during which the muscles must be kept contracted.<sup>5</sup>

"We have seen that rational action arises out of instinctive action when this grows too complex to be perfectly automatic." Conversely, actions once rational, by long continued repetition became automatic:—this is obvious,—what we once did by reasoning, we afterwards do by habit. "Anyone accustomed to traverse particular streets on his way to some place of business finds that, when intending

<sup>1</sup> Relating to the external world.

<sup>2</sup> Directly presented by the senses.

<sup>3</sup> Relating to the mind.

<sup>4</sup> Indirectly obtained from the senses and presented to consciousness for the second time.

<sup>5</sup> Spencer's "Principles of Psychology," Vol. I. part iv. chap. vi.

to branch off elsewhere, he is apt, if engaged in thought, to follow the usual route." We learn to read and cease to consider letters and sounds. The reasoning powers of an infant, which are perhaps equal to those of a dog, develop as it matures; the reasoning powers of a savage develop with extended experience and inheritance into those of a Newton. In the early life of man or monkey all action is unspontaneous: it is all the result of stimulus received from the outside world or overflowing from nervous centres. The child repeats the history of the development of consciousness and of reason.

The distinction between thought and emotion is largely verbal. (This statement gives a great shock to some people.) What we pre-eminently term feelings and emotions are *consolidated groups of complex ideas originally derived from sensations combined by association*.<sup>1</sup> Thought is derived more from the relations between sensations than from the immediate sensations. We compare sensations or faint images of sensations, with other faint images of sensations and know them to be like or unlike in nature, stronger or weaker in intensity; in short, we classify them. Instinct and thought are both assimilations of impressions: the lowest animals class food with food and with previous experiences of eating, while in the highest reasoning processes we class quantities and qualities. Almost every sensation causes in us a slight emotion, but every sensation is, as I previously explained, to a slight extent perceptive—that is, intellectual—all perceptions imply conjunctions. Sensations are more analogous to feelings, and perceptions to thoughts.

"We found that not only do Memory and Reason begin where the psychical changes cease to be automatic, but that where they have existed they disappear, when by perpetual repetition the psychical changes become automatic." With feeling it is so too; hence the charm of novelty: in so far as we can see, know, do things automatically, we see, know, and do them without pleasure.

The most powerful feelings are compounds of many simpler feelings and nascent feelings. Thus love consists of a physical feeling, surrounded by feelings produced by personal beauty, by non-sexual affection, by admiration, by gratification of love of approbation (in being preferred to others), and of self-esteem (in having succeeded in gaining

<sup>1</sup> My meaning will be clearer a little later.

such a preference), by the pleasure of possessing, and by love of liberty (enjoyed owing to familiarity), and by sympathy.

Feelings—that is, the structural modifications in which they are the movements, and which are related to external circumstances and united to one another in accordance with external arrangements—are inherited. For example, “generation after generation, the approach of enemies has excited certain nervous structures in ways much alike in some few general characters, but unlike in multitudinous special characters, and there has followed the excitement of other structures that have similarly (always) agreed in part and disagreed in part”: hence each plexus has been inherited in the form of a well-organised set of connections accompanied by definite reflex actions, surrounded by many feeble connections: in consciousness there is an immediate definite body of perceptions, associated with an enemy’s approach, and causing certain automatic actions: these definite perceptions arouse ideas of injuries following from enemies’ actions and dim feelings of pain called fear. They are dim, because produced in a long period of time by varying actions which all had the one quality in common that causes a feeling of pain—they were all uncomfortable.

I shall have to ask you for the last time to reconsider a complex series of reflex actions, the last of which is imperfectly automatic, and so gives rise to two conflicting incipient excitements in *nervo-motor* apparatuses.

One of these ideal motor changes ultimately becomes real, and when seen subjectively is usually called the Will. (It is not a very good word.) Volition is first exhibited in the conscious activity of the mind, caused by outer circumstances, which *do not occur often enough* to produce automatic action, but which excite two conflicting *ideal* motor changes, each of which incipient and continued excitements, not being sufficient to discharge itself in actual action, will excite faint images in nerve centres with which it has become closely connected: images which represent the consequences and feelings attendant on the two conflicting actions, one of which will actually follow any further excitement of its motor centre. Conversely, when action becomes automatic, will ceases; for example, after we have learned to walk or bicycle we no longer need to think of our feet or our handle bars, we guide them without any exertion of will.

And what about freedom of will? It is our invariable experience that there is a settled order of phenomena in the universe : in ordinary phrase, every effect has a cause. A man's body and mind, therefore, his thoughts and acts, are all the results of his past history and of the past history of the world and of its present history. "All actions must be determined by those psychical connections which experience has generated, either in the life of the individual, or in that general antecedent life of which the accumulated results are organised in his constitution." Just as it is impossible to understand the creation of anything out of nothing, so it is impossible to understand how the supposed Adam could have been free at the beginning of all human life to do either this or that : his first act must have been the effect of previous forces. (It is not necessary to say this, because Adam, poor man, is now a myth ; theologians have abandoned him because his history does not sufficiently agree with generally accepted facts.)

The pain of hunger is caused by an inactivity of the alimentary canal :—solitude, causing an inaction of certain central nervous organs, causes great misery in sensitive people, and in course of time a disease of the entire nervous system :—excessive activity of certain nerves produces a burning pain ; the medium activities, on the other hand, are pleasurable. The medium activity is primarily the healthy activity, pain and pleasure being in most animals the main guidances of life, so that natural selection prevents any class of animals from retaining unhealthy pleasures. The matter is much complicated in man by changing conditions, which conflict with his inherited pleasurable feelings, and by the fact that unhealthy habits of life finally render inherited feelings out of harmony with an abnormal (shall I say degenerate?) physical state. Pleasures and pains are due to a diffused stimulation of many parts of the nervous system, derived from a special stimulus applied to one part.

It may be noted that pains are due to excessive action, but, in general, pleasures are not. Consequently, the most permeable lines of nervous action are those associated with painful feelings. Hence, when in a certain state of the circulation or of the blood, or of both, the nervous system becomes badly nourished, the pressure in it falls and currents pass only along the most permeable lines : the prevalent mood or "state of mind," the vague feelings to which attention is not directed, but which constitute "sub-

consciousness," is gloomy, fearful, despondent. On the other hand, good health increases the circulation, stimulates the nerves, causing them to set the large number of vague, shallow, pleasure channels into action, and also by intensifying the sensations received from external objects, diffuses a general stimulation to the nervous system. Stimulation of the nervous system, through the motor centres, improves the functional activities of all the organs—that is, improves the general health. Pleasure is healthy and health is pleasure.

But there are exceptions: hashish, by stimulating the nerves, gives real pleasure. So, to some people, does brandy.

Let me return to my infant or young monkey. At first, I said, all its actions are automatic. Then the consciousness of the pleasure of some sensations is established; and later, a connection between the pleasure and the sight or taste of something; later still, it learns to set in action (by means of the right motor centres of its brain) the muscles that help to procure pleasures. Now, let us look at some of the circumstances that effect the mental powers.

The action of the nerve centres of the brain may be stopped by pressure, which causes unconsciousness (coma); if the depressed portion of bone is raised thought and consciousness recommence; loss of blood either from a wound or illness causes apathy; old age, by decreasing the circulation, weakens the nervous force, so that the impressions made on the nerves by sounds and sights are less,—the smaller impressions cause a feebler memory: on the other hand, an alteration in the quality of the blood, may cause such vivid impressions or ideas as to produce madness; great illness, causing nervous prostration, may make people forget where they are (this is not very uncommon) and even who they are: these are a few examples showing that mental phenomena correspond with the nervous conditions, of which they are really the interior view. Continued action wastes a nerve and causes fatigue until the nerve has been repaired; a fit of anger or great sorrow is followed by an unusual indifference. There are exceptions, however, to this last principle, because the emotion may so stimulate the nerves that control the supplies of blood, that an increased supply is delivered to the excited parts. Analogous to this are cases in which emotion causes blushing or pallor, stoppage of the heart or increased

circulation, by affecting the nerve centres that control the supplies of blood.

A pretty example of the effect of fatigue on nerves was furnished by an advertisement which was formerly often used. You were asked, I think, to attentively fix the eyes on certain red letters placed on a white background. Those parts of the nerve centres in which the sensation of red was produced became fatigued, and on transferring the eyes to blank white paper the red components of the white light no longer produced their ordinary effect on the fatigued parts, and the two other components caused a green appearance. Similarly a loud noise deafens and a bright light renders the sight dim. Certain nerve centres get so tired every night that on excluding sensations from them their activity ceases temporarily and they are repaired during sleep.

Violent emotion affects the sense nerves: thus fear causes illusions, and so does faith. Miracles will happen if you believe fervently in them. "That the state of the body, by affecting the brain, has great influence on the moral tendencies is known to most of those who have suffered from chronic derangements of the digestion or liver," says Darwin.

As I have shown, when the brain develops automatic action is replaced by consciousness, judgment, and reason: so, too, in a simple brain with few possibilities of different routes for nervous discharges, an association of ideas once formed is permanent: in the developed brain premature unalterable conclusions and obstinate beliefs are replaced by careful meditations and balancing of evidences and reasonings.

Thought is naturally disturbed by sensations. Hence pain, weariness, noise, and continued hunger decrease the effective mental power, although by a temporary stimulation of one part of the brain they may produce unusually vivid ideas. People, who wish to think and to continue thinking should avoid ascetic practices and (if possible) general ill-health. Those who have recovered from some illnesses will know the curiously depressing feeling of mental languor that accompanies a bad circulation and insufficient nervous energy.

I said that feelings automatically excite certain actions, which were originally associated with the external circumstances to which the evolution of the feeling is due.

For instance, rage causes an opening of the lips to expose the teeth once used in attacking an enemy ; a frowning to shut out the sun and intensify the view of his actions ; and an expansion of the nostrils to facilitate breathing during the fight or when attacking him with the teeth. Other feelings stimulate the general nervous system, so that the efferent nerves cause movements of limbs or muscles whose weight is proportional to the amount of the acquired stimulus ; joy causes the dog to wag his tail or run wildly about, and the man to sing, shout, or go with "a hop, skip, and jump," like a boy let out from school ; slight irritation or impatience makes him "beat the devil's tattoo," or waggle one leg as it lies crossed over the other one ; numerous emotions by stimulating the nerves connected with muscles used in talking alter the pitch of the voice. These actions are not produced by the will, and we cannot always entirely stop them ; the nervous excitement must sometimes exhaust itself in some action ; a man will "nervously" (as we commonly say) fidget with his fingers because he does not want to show his emotion by the action proper to it ; twitchings of the mouth are caused in preventing a shedding of tears.<sup>1</sup>

It is not likely that the lazy reader has read much of Kant's works or of his more direct followers. Still, in Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus," or elsewhere, you may have read about "forms of thought," and how time and space are not derived from experience, but are intuitions of the mind, and that nothing really exists except the mind ; everything else is known only, and exists only in the subject, the ego, the spirit. I suppose I must say a little in answer to this view. To begin with, sensations, being raw thought, are less liable to err than thought is, because they are obtained by a shorter process. Of what use, then, if you could do so, to show by *reason* that what I know by *sensations* does not really exist at all ? Sensations are the basis on which all my knowledge is founded. It is of no use for a man to seek to prove that he died last week by writing yesterday to say so.

If we really attempt to conceive space or time—to make an inner image of them, and not merely talk about them—we find that we cannot really conceive space unless we con-

<sup>1</sup> The subject is not sufficiently pertinent to my aim to allow me to give further examples, and I give only those the explanation of which is clearest.

ceive points or positions in it ; similarly also, we must continue to think and produce a certain sequence of thought in order to know time. In other words, we have not even now acquired an inward conception of time and space apart from all images to occupy them. We cannot think of time and space as properties of the ego. We cannot possibly think of external existing things that affect us as not actually at present external to us. If we did it seems to me that we should probably die from starvation, for we should consider ourselves absolutely independent of all outside non-existence.

Again, do we find that less developed brains have acquired a conception of space and time equal to our own? The Greeks are said to have had an imperfect idea of space ; it is not necessary to suppose the movements of a cow that is always milked at the same time to be guided by a sense of time, and not by a mere association of nervous feelings ; and some savages are said to derive their epochs from factors little more abstract.

The gradual acquisition of ideas of form and motion leads to ideas of space and time. Sensations caused by moving a muscle, sensations in one part of the body, which moves and touches successive points on another part, sensations in the other part of successive points being touched, sensations of many points coextensively touching, and many points coextensively being touched—these help to give a conception of form. Increase of memory and reason lead to an idea of motion : the identity is established of the thing which now appears in one manner, but once, when seen in a different position, and moving at a different pace, appeared different ; and as soon as there is a consciousness of comparing the thing with the image of what it was ; as soon as there is an idea of its continued existence, of its successive conditions, there is a conception of time. (The dullest parts of this dull section are over, weary reader. It is worse for me than for you.)

Our actual sense of space is derived in looking at an object from the muscular contractions needed to focus the eye to the right distance, the size of the image perceived, and the position of it on the retina. It seems inconceivable, perhaps, that so many unconscious factors can give results known in consciousness. But there are other instances of this (see my previous remarks on the automatic actions of a practised pianist). Space consciousness is proportionate to



the variety and rapidity of the sensations of motion that go with receipt of sensations from without. Thus the eye can be moved all over the images falling on it, and gives us the best idea of space. Touch can travel all over objects, but hearing is only slightly adjustable in position, and gives little idea of space. Ideas of space and time are fixed functions of "fixed structures that have been moulded into correspondence with fixed outer relations—relations that have been perceived by every creature, by every successively-developed race of creatures, and that now cohere automatically because of the frequency with which they have followed one another in experience."

I think I have now arrived at the last stage of this argument. Some distance back I assumed that consciousness is due to force conveyed to the highest nerve centres. Now, parts of the highest nerve centres of man—that is, of his brain—parts called the cerebral hemispheres—can be destroyed without destroying those parts that automatically control the organs (such as the heart) which are necessary for life. If the cerebral hemispheres are destroyed, "by annihilating sensation, ideation, volition, and intelligence in general," the man is reduced to the condition of a complex machine, the activity of which is the immediate result of certain stimulations of the nerves, either from without or from the internal organs.<sup>1</sup> The front part of a man's brain having been shot away, he was subject to fits of automatism. In this condition he would eat if fed, and perform many actions to which he was accustomed, in which, in fact, he had been educated. Although he moved about, and avoided objects in the rooms, with which he was well acquainted, he was unconscious, and in his waking or ordinary state knew nothing of these intervening periods.<sup>2</sup>

Those still interested in the subject might read authoritative books explaining the phenomena of sleep; of nervous diseases and their mental effects, such as irritability and inability to use the higher parts of the brain; of over-stimulation of the brain caused by over-exertion in one kind of mental work, which produces a congestion of blood in one part of the brain, leading to sleeplessness, mania, delirium, or madness; also books on the effects of stimulants, narcotics, poisons, and anæsthetics:—in all these instances the brain is seen to be part of the body, and

<sup>1</sup> Ferrier's "Functions of the Brain."

<sup>2</sup> See Huxley's "Miscellaneous Essays."

thought and consciousness in general to be affected *together with* other parts of the body.

I have now briefly indicated the way in which we can trace out a series of connections between the lowest and the highest, the most conscious, forms of matter: every advance of consciousness, every physiological phenomenon is correlated with a physical change of nervous structure or nervous action. The mind and the body cannot be separated; they are not independent. Consciousness does not seem to you like a nervous movement, and water does not seem like oxygen and hydrogen. But water is oxygen and hydrogen. (Consciousness arises as soon as two different states of consciousness can be experienced—a lighter and a darker impression, let us say. The mind passes to and fro between two sensations,<sup>1</sup> and, symbolising such successive states of consciousness thus:

A x B

as soon as the focus of attention is shifted from A to x, which is the transition from one sensation to another one, the attention is transferred from the sensation to the *perception* of its likeness or unlikeness to other sensations. As soon as the mind can focus its attention on x it has reached the power of forming *perceptions*.)

As for the soul, if you believe in it, I should like to know now what you think it does. In earlier times, when people thought madness was caused by an evil spirit that entered into a man, they assumed that it was the soul that thought and that went away when a man slept. In still earlier times, when the uses of the soul had not been restricted, they thought all animals had souls,<sup>2</sup> and sometimes waterfalls and rivers, and in still more savage ages, rocks and stones, which, after all, may fall and hurt you. And this is more logical than the Christian conception. I do not say that Christian myths are altogether stupid, but they do not agree with facts. If the gaslight had consciousness it might discover that it was composed of certain gases, but that it was quite different from all of its component constituents, and besides, that it was alight. It would feel in itself a burning soul, which no unburning creature possesses. A creature cannot look at itself as it looks at other things. Everywhere we find an orderly progress of matter from simpler

<sup>1</sup> Strictly speaking, the transition must itself be formed of sensations.

<sup>2</sup> Some Greeks thought the animals had inferior souls, man having several souls.

to more complex forms, and there is never to us a resemblance between the force and the forces that give birth to it. We are "part of a great series of causes and effects which, in unbroken continuity, composes that which is, and has been, and shall be—the sum of existence."<sup>1</sup> The final cause of everything is unknown and unknowable. To say that God knows is to give him a mind, and therefore also a body like a man's; for thought and knowledge are the final steps in processes that begin with the reception of sensations coming either from the world outside us or from the inside of our bodies—and therefore an infinite being could not think or know; still less can we assume that anything not endowed with a body, and with senses somewhat like our own, can hear or see or be angry or forgive. And I have no wish that you should believe in a God who made man sin, damned all that man's descendants because of the loss of one of his favourite apples, then made his own innocent Son suffer; and so, having quenched his thirst for blood, was able to pardon all who, as a sign of confidence, were ready to accept what they were told, and persuade themselves that they knew what they could not understand.

And death has no more terrors than sleep. If we once deprived anyone of happiness or poured the poison of unkindness on to wounds that fate has inflicted, can any faith offer to restore opportunities of being kind to the dead? You may wish for heaven but I do not want a hell—hell is offered to the majority. Many would wish to live longer than they may, though the added days were no better than those that have passed; many would wish to see again those whom they have loved and have lost, and to see them as in their happiest moments. If we have enjoyed the day we may be unwilling to go to bed; if we have enjoyed being with friends we are sorry that tomorrow we cannot meet. But another man is tired of life and desires death—"there the weary are at rest, and the servant is free from his master"; there hunger is at an end and pain and anxiety are no more. We do not all agree in fearing the sleep of death—some would gladly sleep if assured that in that sleep there are no dreams. A man's opinions of death are seldom his own opinions; a man at the age of thirty may have only seen the death of one person who interested him; but he has probably acquired by inheritance and sympathetic imitation many very

<sup>1</sup> J. Huxley's "Animal Automatism." 

emotional doctrines. If desire for heaven is your chief motive, life seems empty without it; but, heaven or no heaven, there is just as much in life as ever there was, and very good reasons why one kind of conduct is good in comparison with another. "When death comes we are no more, either to suffer or to enjoy. Yet it is the groundless fear of this nothing that poisons all the tranquillity of life and holds men imprisoned when existence is a torment." Death may occur suddenly; those who are old or ill often become sleepy and indifferent, so that death comes very gradually; in both cases, those who in health looked forward to death with fear are not frightened when they are near it. It is usually preceded by unconsciousness. If you desire life through the constant transmigration of all that composes you, you shall live again many times and in many ways: "all those creatures we behold are but the herbs of the field digested into flesh in them, or more remotely carnified in ourselves." That which once formed part of me is walking about in another creature, and at the time of the resurrection I cannot see how there will be enough stuff to clothe at once all the successive generations of men who wore one another's cast-off fleshly garments, refitted and repaired many times during their lives. The whole world of Shakespeare's works is made out of paper and ink and the universe out of force and matter. As for the utter corruptness of mankind, it is a lie: we all inherit one kind of body and mind: driven on by cold and hunger and desire for pleasure and inherited desire for life we struggle one with another, and either die or learn to advance. Our existence proves that we are not utterly corrupt: all men aim at what appears to them to be best; if they are mistaken, try to teach them.<sup>1</sup> Some men are more stupid than others and the justest man is he who reasons most,—he alone will understand what is due to himself in order that he may have most power of serving the commonwealth, and what is due to others.<sup>2</sup> To live well is impossible unless those around us live well: no one is independent.

If we had a sense more, or one less, our conception of the universe would be changed: our present perceptions are relative, being determined not only by the nature of what we perceive but by the condition of the organs with

<sup>1</sup> See Epictetus' teachings.

<sup>2</sup> See Plato's "Republic."

which we perceive ; still it seems to me that our perceptions must correspond to some of the qualities of the absolute things—they are symbols or perspective views of the actual shapes of things. In this world we shall have plenty to admire and wonder at, unless we let false, dead guesses, inherited from savages, and universally believed by ignorant people with little developed minds, shut out everything around us.

I believe one reason why mind seems superior to condition of brain is because one hemisphere of the brain seems completely able (or almost completely) to carry on mental operations without the other one. The individual who is paralysed as to sensation and motion on one side of the body by disease of the opposite side of the brain can still feel, will, and think, if not with the same vigour as before yet, apparently, with the same completeness.<sup>1</sup>

I cannot answer all the silly objections made by people who cannot really understand the subject and who have little idea of natural laws. One man cannot understand how personality or memory can exist in a brain, the component parts of which are always being changed. But a man's personal appearance does not alter violently, although his body is continually being repaired with freshly-digested materials, and there are no sudden changes in his general constitution. I have explained how what we call memory arises. We actually try to remember by a process of association : we usually think of some word or words which are connected with the desired information ; their faint images bring into action other images which were originally connected with them ; there is actually nothing stored up in our minds ; they have been so affected by a past action, that the repetition of that same action has been rendered easier, the structural obstacles opposing it have already been decreased or removed. We learn our lessons "by heart" by constantly repeating them, each repetition facilitating the revival of the impression. We usually remember best what we are most familiar with.

Perhaps you call this "materialism," but I wish to teach it for the sake of greater spirituality. We do not so much mind what other people have to eat, to look at, to work at, because, after all, these things do not affect their souls. So their lives are dull, monotonous, and ugly. I may say that a man's mind is part of his body, and advise you

<sup>1</sup> Ferrier's "Functions of the Brain."

therefore to take care of your body, but, after all, the mind is the only part of the body that has consciousness, and it does not live by bread alone, it needs kindness, beauty, and some opportunities of thinking.

Some words then, like hell and soul, I would gladly obliterate or make as dim as Baal or Beelzebub: other words, like God or death, the two solid ghosts of excellent but false theories not in accordance with present knowledge, must either change their meanings or be replaced. Let men of letters restore them to truer values. I do not know that I could use the word "God" to denote the unknown, unknowable, final cause. Other advantages will follow the disappearance of Christianity; we shall no longer waste time in learning mythology and then learning (perhaps with pain) that it is mythical; we shall no longer waste time in discussing the propriety of prayers for the blessed dead or the nature of union of divinity and humanity in Jesus; we shall learn a truer morality, based on reason, and perhaps be taught to avoid errors whose nature we now have to discover by painfully erring; we shall devote more energy to ends more likely to advantage humanity.

### III

"For as the physician considers that the body will receive no benefit from taking food until the internal obstacles have been removed, so the purifier of the soul is conscious that his patient will receive no benefit from the application of knowledge until he is refuted, and from refutation learns modesty; he must be purged of his prejudices first and made to think that he knows only what he knows, and no more."—PLATO.

"To make a solemn suit to you that are partial readers to set aside partiality, to take in good part my writings, and with indifferent eyes to look upon my book were labour lost and time ill-employed; for I should no more prevail herein than if, a hundred years since, I should have entreated your predecessors to believe that Robin Goodfellow, that great and ancient bull-beggar, had been but a cozening merchant, and no devil indeed. But Robin Goodfellow ceaseth now to be much feared, and Popery is sufficiently discovered; nevertheless, witches' charms and conjurers' cozenage are yet effectual."—REGINALD SCOT. (Printed 1584).

I HOPE that the following narrative may illustrate and add to my arguments:—

When I went to sleep I was sane and agnostic; but when I dreamt, only my worse faculties were active. I

dreamt that I got up and went down into the streets. The streets were the common streets, as they always look on a fine night; but yet there was a difference, some strange impulse came to me: I could not tell what it was, but it did not seem pleasant—recurrently, with equal force and at equal intervals—but I did not know whether it was a sound or a blow, whether inside my body or outside. And I came to a bridge over the railway; on one side of the road the gas-lamp made the pavement orange, and on the other side the arc-lamp belonging to the railway made it a cold bluish grey: the walls on both sides of the road sloped upwards on the dark blue night sky. On the bridge stood a man in the costume of a former time, with silk stockings, and slashed sleeves, which showed blue lining in the openings. As I passed him he said to me: "Let me walk with you: I do not wish to be alone. I am come from hell; there is a holiday there to-night and Christ has opened the doors. I am so tired I should not like to be alone; all things are very faint to me, and yet I immediately perceive every disagreeable quality, while what once would have seemed beautiful is no longer beautiful." "For what crime were you condemned?" "I tried to think; I wished to help men; and, thinking, I could not believe."

His face and his hands were pale and limp like the bloodless forms of the dead; his eyes were dull.

"How shameful," I said, "if I could ascend into the heavens and stand before God I would shout out my indignation and attempt to depose the unjust tyrant."

"If you wish to do so," he answered, "kill a dog, and then kill yourself."

"Will you not come home with me?" I asked.

So he returned with me, and we walked together, though he had nothing interesting to say. But I pitied him and was angry at his unjust sufferings; for during his early life he had studied and thought and observed and had not drunk the wine of pleasure recklessly; and when he was old he had not been able to drink it and it was hateful to him, paining his stomach, and sickening him; and after his death his efforts had been rewarded with endless torture till thought and will left him, till the whole world was dead to him and only his own pains lived, so that he felt no pity for the others whose shrieks and groans and sighs surrounded him in hell; for though pain be the source of

our virtues and our progress (for who would try to know, to think, to make, to eat, if ignorance, hunger, dulness, nakedness, were not painful?), yet endless pain, without hope or interval, is the source only of cruelty, of blind self-worship, of madness, of thoughtlessness, and of thoughtless vice.

When morning was ready to appear he left me. And after breakfast I, too, went out. And I saw what it was that had troubled me on the previous night: drop by drop the blood of Jesus fell. Dull drop by dull drop the blood of Jesus fell; drop after drop, across the blue sky red drop followed red drop.

I passed by well-fed men's faces, covered with a net-like pattern of purple veins, the fat flesh hanging down beside the mouth; by workmen's faces, dull brown in colour, the angles of the jawbone strongly marked, and the flesh of the cheeks deeply hollowed and wrinkled down on to the neck and beside the mouth; by smooth ladies' faces, surrounded by lace and pale mauve bonnets, crowned with leaves and artificial flowers; by old women with eyebrows constantly worried, the flabby flesh hanging in quivering curves and mouldings, and the outlines of their lips and eyes becoming tremulous and shapeless; by faces like earthenware on which red clots of colour speckle a paler ground; by swollen red faces, shining like silk; by a small man, moving waveringly and with bent head, whose eyes stare from fatless depths, while age and want have made flaccid his flesh; by a hag with eyes bleary from weakness and drink, stumbling in broken boots, a fat chin falling in waves from the projecting lower lip into her shawl; by girls' faces, on whose cheeks insufficient food has dug curved hollows; faces of elderly, rheumatic labourers, earth-coloured and roughly wrinkled and moulded by prominent muscles, like sun-cracked earth, with mouths opened and twisted by effort and pain, and eyes half shut; and pale, thin, indoor faces, smoothly creased; old women with shrunk breasts and swollen bodies; fat men, whose stomachs are parabolic when seen in profile; anæmic girls, with faces of lifeless yellow, faintly speckled with dots of brownish pink; and faces inhumanly happy and healthy. I passed by men in the gutters selling cures for all bodily pains, for corns and diseases of lungs and heart and limbs, ointments and pills and liquids and lozenges and pastes, and there were crowds of labourers gathered round them; and by public-houses,



with marble pillars and bright bars of brass to hold lights in their windows ; by old iron exposed on stalls, keys and padlocks and rings, hanging in chains, rusty and confused ; by jewellers' shops, displaying unlucky opals and chryso-prases and moonstones and chrysolites and emeralds and gold ; and shops which display beef-steak puddings, which make men feel like angels, who (I suppose) know nothing of a feeling of emptiness, and they also display pale yellow slices of pudding, spotted with large currants ; and a beggar, with a red nose and a yellowish brown face, two deep furrows waver in his flabby cheeks and disappear in the shaggy beard that borders it, while two torn coats flap over his hands, which tremble in the pockets of his ragged trousers.

If you look at people's faces, I thought, you can study their religion, both that to which they are born and that which they acquire in living, and you will find many faces which contradict the creeds which their own lips would profess.

I bought a pistol and a dog. I went to the embankment. In zig-zags the ripples passed over the grey water, and the men on grey barges, bending far backwards, pulled at oars, and staggered backwards ; they passed under grey stone bridges and by long curved lines of grey buildings ; the small space of blue in the sky and the green leaves dotted on trees on the embankment only intensified the monochromatic impression. Monochromatic, except where drop by drop across the grey sky, red drop following red drop, the blood of Jesus fell.

I seized the dog and broke its skull against the stone wall which supported one of the bridges that passed over the river at a level higher than that of the road. I then shot myself with the pistol. My soul fastened the ghost of a piece of string to the ghost of the dog. For a moment both I and the dog gazed sadly at our bodies ; we were, and ever should be, bleeding, one with a battered skull, the other with a pierced chest. Our poor bodies lay bleeding likewise. People began to gather round them, people curious, seeking excitement or oblivion of pain, or disgusted, or professionally alert. But the dog and I were ghosts among the living ; we had no pain, all was dim and indifferent to us. We were cut off from all the living ; they were busy with our bodies and did not see us.

The dog led me, for dogs always know their way ; but to

me the land of the dead was a strange land. He led me to a flight of steps down which we went. At the lower end we reached another embankment, like the one we had left ; but the sky was greyer and heavier and all the colours were duller. The people looked as they had looked at the moment of their death ; fleshless as though from madness, marked by strange sores and wounds, curiously worn into hollows, with staring eyes, repulsively marked by suffering.

At first, I thought it was Sunday, only worse. Everyone was tired, no one smiled or had a lover. The dog led me through the silent streets till we suddenly came to a wood. In the midst of the wood there was a palace built of pillars made of intertwining strands, of blue twisted with gold, of silvery grey mingled with pale green ; a palace of illusions, of ghostly beauties, of that which is not but has been supposed to be ; where happy gods were seated in shrines which were gilded and painted with gay, adoring figures ; and walls were frescoed with dreams half dreamt—incomplete masterpieces, like cathedrals growing soiled in colour before they are entirely built ; and fair gardens filling court-yards, corrupted by the weeds of bitter life ; fasting monks holding up the weight of an insane world ; idols, monstrous, many-headed, smeared with blood ; dark passages full of rubbish ; gorgeous palaces, cloud-capped with domes and minarets and pagoda-like towers, where roof rested on roof, and the whole palace was supported from the ground on pillars of thread ; dream buildings of the most monstrous size, partly hidden by perplexing smears of gloom and mystery, crossed by curving staircases and swooping galleries that with sudden twists rested on air in impossible positions, chipped and daubed with delusive beauties, that, seen in the right light and from the right position, seemed magnificent as Don Quixote's thoughts ; court-yard forests of metaphysics, and then I passed downwards under the trees and stood on a great rock that bordered a precipice. Above me were the heavens ; below in the darkness, hell flickering behind its doors ; and between them was the stage of earth.

Drop by drop the blood of Jesus fell. Some angels sang "Holy," while others answered "Blessed." From the palaces of the Mohammedan heaven came sounds of revelry ; each man rejoicing with his forty heavenly wives. Hymning the triune deity, the Christian angels of light and love flattered the blaze of God that proceeded from above. The Jewish

rabbis or learned men discussed where God is and what—  
 “In him the future is now and the past is here ; the there is present and the here is everywhere. For God is one and all ; and being one, he cannot have parts ; and being all, there can be nothing outside him ; nothing then can alter him from without, nor is there anything in him that can change in relation to anything else. God, then, is unchangeable ; and being unchangeable, there is with him no succession of any things, for where there is succession there is a change from one thing to the succeeding one. But if there is with him no succession there is neither time nor place with him, for time is a succession in period, space a succession in extension. With him there is neither time nor space nor change ; without him there is nothing ; he the unity only is, the variety, complexity, changing, is fallacy. But he is nowhere, for if he were in himself then were he not truly one but twofold, having parts ; if he were enclosed by something not himself then he would not be all things.”

In despair I looked at the earth. I only noticed that everything was rather dim and disorderly ; but there seemed to be place and time, though somewhat muddled. But perhaps there seemed to be time and place, because I was not in heaven. “If this is an allegorical dream,” I said to the dog, “I expect that forest was a forest of confusion or muddle-headedness. I should think they are somewhere in the Middle Ages on earth. There are a great many priests and sacred processions and much murdering, raping, burning, and miserable peasants are forced to fight and waste in private wars. But see, here are savages.”

I saw the holy priest advance from his people and smear the big rock with the blood of a man. He said :

“O stone, O very strong stone, O imponderable stone ! The mighty tiger (I will speak of him with awe) father of terrible tribes, and king of the man-slaying men ; who shall dare to answer when his voice is heard and who shall disobey when he utters laws ? My lord the bull treads softly and the noble panther hides itself ; as for us we tremble with fear. But, O greatest of stones, you do not move or avoid his eye. Thou art not afraid : thou dost not fear : not afraid art thou : yea, thou fearest not. We bring you fat and fair offerings, men of whose flesh we have eaten : accept their lives from us and remember the day when you shared life with us. When you wear your bright

shirt that gleams in the starry sky, when you flash the sword of your lightning and throw the spear of your thunder, remember that we have eaten blood with you. When you appear among us, remember and pardon. If there be any of us well formed, attractive or fat, ask, inform us, we will give and rejoice to eat with you. Be with us. As for our enemies, pour out your divine anger on them ; let them never rest."

Then I too knelt and worshipped from a distance. "Stone," I said, "awful part of the unknown universe, visible embodiment of the incomprehensible reality that so dimly acts on us : as much god as any other god, that is formed by our minds and limited by our powers :—I will worship you and bow down ; God is vexed (ha, ha, he ! ) I am worshipping a rival."

And I danced about on the rock. Bow, wow, wow, said the dog, dancing also.

"Mighty stone," I said, falling on to my knees with strongly-beating heart, "I trust in you, the greater than man, the vast process around us. All that I suffer I will try not to complain about ; the long nights, disturbed, verminous, hungry, the long days, half dead, vacant, the days of over-work, the infinite vexations and dull mechanical repetitions of a life-destroying formula of drudgery, the desperate experiments in beastly amusement, drink and women and gluttony, the spiteful laughter of enemies, all the miseries of life, those known to me and those suffered by others, they are all as they should be in the vast process, as evolution would have them be.

"If I suffer, what am I ? If I am true to my own reasoning, and try to think rightly, what does it matter if I cannot justify my life when others blame me ? If I am untrue to my reasoning, careless, eager for the pleasures that pain others, have I not suffered and learnt by suffering to like evil ? are there no excuses for me ? shall I not always return towards pleasure, true pleasure, which is virtue ? The past is unchangeable, why feel remorse ?

"O stone, you are for ever silent.

"As for God and my enemies, pour out your divine anger on them ; destroy them ; let them never rest until they be destroyed and happiness reigns."

While I was talking, on earth some people were worshipping their god,—a more advanced god than the stone I was speaking to. He was seated on a flower, made of

red and gold petals that rested on a gold stem and pedestal ; his crossed legs were covered with loose trousers, which were embroidered with a pattern of gold lines and dragons ; there was only a little blue drapery hanging on his bright red upper parts. He had three eyes, the third one being placed vertically in the centre of his forehead. He had many arms, gaily flourishing flowers and rattles. On his head was a dragon-shaped helmet of gold and scarlet. Jewelled chains of thin interlacing lines and of solid spots of precious stones and metals fell over his chest. Behind him was a red circular screen, decorated with a blue and gold painted pattern behind his head and with a fainter circular ornament below that. The whole figure was enclosed in a shrine, which was covered with tiers of jutting eaves like a pagoda, and stood on a base of bulging gilded mouldings. As a separate piece of sculpture, he was bad ; as part of the decoration of his temple, he was gay and excellent. Mauve and pale yellow and pink were the walls of his temple ; they were inlaid with mosaic curves of white and grey and gold. Over these subdued colours gleamed here and there bright grouped lines and spots of crimson and vermillion, flame, and orange. The torches were lit ; the gay candlesticks and banners placed in position ; bright priests, with robes embroidered with flowers and birds and insects, admitted the people. Scent and silk and flowers, lace and embroidery, bells and jewels and feathers, surrounded Nishnam. Scent and silk and flowers, blue and scarlet and red trousered legs of glittering colours, passed before Nishnam ; yellow and copper and black, creamy and ruddy and brown, were the limbs of the dancers that laughed to delight him ; fanners swayed languidly, cooling the air for him, incense still rose for him, ending his feast ; sunlight through windows, broken to laciness, sunlight through doors, more purple than gold, fought with the torchlight ; torches or candles or lamps, pale or shining through jewels, painted the faces with patches, contrasting the colours of lights, confusing the blending shadows ; tam-tam clashes, sing-song voices, ting-tang tinklings, incense and smoke and perfume, delighted the well-fed Nishnam. "This is my god," I said, "I will worship him. O joy ! you are my god. Religion of sorrow, whatever that means, I hate you. You are my god, O joy ! you shall be god of everyone. If we must sometimes suffer, if we must sometimes be sad, I yet see no reason why we should not always

admire you. As for God, pour out your divine anger on him, let him never rest, until he be destroyed and happiness reigns."

While I was talking all the worshippers had left the temple except one girl. Taking off her loose white garment, she went up to the god naked. . . .

And then she said: "Great Nishnam, say that you are satisfied with me; good Nishnam, say that you are satisfied; say that you are satisfied, O Nishnam."

The dog was running to and fro on the rock and barking.

"How preposterous you are!" I said to the dog. "Did you not bring me here? And you were not obliged to look; you could have hid behind a tree; I did not hold you. Anyone could see you are an English dog. You want to be shocked, and you hope to be shocked, and then you bark at and damn whoever shocks you. No one could like the bawdy less than I do; but a certain licentiousness has often been expected from the hater of God, and I must play the whole part, just as it is expected. We are largely what we are supposed to be. Why don't you look at the heavens if you do not like the earth?"

Drop by drop the blood of Jesus fell. Some angels sang "Holy," while others answered "Blessed." "Praise the Lord," said the starry multitudes.

Flogging their bare backs flagellants passed through the streets of a town on earth, narrow streets in which each story projected beyond the one below it. They rejoiced in holy starvation, in saintly dirt and discomfort, and in religious confusion of mind and bleeding backs; when they trembled, when the sharp lash stung, they pitied themselves and thought that now they were saints; they wailed aloud because of their sins, and thought that now God must hear them. They fell into swoons and God comforted them with visions.

When God heard them wailing and saw them, he said to the heavens: "Be silent, that I may delight myself with their holy sufferings." Then the choirs ceased; the starry wheels stood still; the creatures also were stationary.

Now, it was night upon earth. The bloodshed, the uncertain government, the private wars and monstrous violence of the powerful, the weariness and pain of starvation and plague, made people eager for pleasure and for the forbidden witches' sabbaths. Darker and darker the earth became: in the western sky the dark blue slowly covered the pale

green, while the purple streaks fringed with bright orange faded. Then the moon shone strangely into familiar cottage rooms. Over the fields, scratching and quarrelling, came witches in the form of cats. Their green eyes gleamed. Passing a village, one of them climbed down a chimney and said :

“ Devil speed thee  
Go thou with me ! ”

The woman of the cottage rose from bed, placed a broom by her husband's side, and said :

“ I lay down this besom, in the devil's name,  
Let it not stir till I come again.”

The broom became like her.

Then she went out with the cat, took a straw from the hedge, placed it between her legs, said :

“ Horse and hattock in the devil's name,”

and the straw flew along, carrying her.

Goats and bats and toads and wolves, birds and moths and hyenas joined them. From foreign lands others came sailing over the sea in sieves ; they welcomed the moon as god as she shone down on the zig-zag waves. Passing a churchyard they dug up parts of the dead ; for shall not these decaying things impart their qualities to anything with which they are afterwards brought into contact ? So that if they be mingled with guts and galls of toads, the liver of a hare and parings of the nails of a living person's toes and fingers, that living person will be injured. Diana, goddess of the night ; Abunde, queen of the fairies ; Herodias, kissing the head of St John, whom she loves now that she has killed him,—such exiled gods and wicked lovers of beauty, wisdom, and life join them also. All who retained the wisdom of druids and ancient priestesses came to the secret sacrifices and ceremonies of the defeated religions, towards the summit of the sacred mountain where gods had lived in happier days. See how the light of the torches held by attendants flickers on the faces of the great ladies ; now revealing the pale gold on one side of Herodias' cheek and nose, while the rest is hidden in shadow, now gleaming on to her face from below ; moonlight and torch-light contend in the reddish-brown hair and healthy face of Abunde, where the shadows are brightened by lines of re-

flected light. Some there are who look as though they were lying at home ; but they have anointed themselves or drunk poisonous potions, and they feel themselves flying and conversing with the devil. Ghosts came also ; King Arthur and others who did not die, but will return to deliver us, and poets who learnt in fairyland. And fairies were there, but their beauty is hollow ; seen rightly, their impious beauty is hideous ; and invisible witches, who had anointed themselves with witches' butter and salve. Those who came now for the first time were led to a church, where the devil awaits them. Those who know him greeted him with salutations such as : "You are welcome, our lord," and "How do you, my lord?" and brought the neophytes to him. He was respectably dressed, but his hands and feet had claws. The neophytes then denied their baptism, and putting one hand on their head and the other on the sole of their foot, denounced all between them to the devil. He then pricked them, sprinkled them in their own blood, and baptised them in his own name. They then went and joined the dancing on the mountain or were given toads and insects to baptise. The devil stood in the midst of them in the form of a goat, like the old German god, Donar. The musician sat in a tree.

Suddenly the music ceased. The devil began to deliver a sermon. He spoke of piety, and of the torture of the impious, who were being burnt in slow fire in order that they might suffer and have time to repent ; of the children of heretics, robbed of all property, left to starvation and prostitution by the command of the holy Church, who received the property of the damned ; of dead heretics who were sentenced in order to rob their children. He spoke of the reformation that was to be, when, instead of being persecuted by the authority of centuries of tradition, and tortured according to the wise precepts of former generations, a new faith, itself rebelling, would try to kill and torture those who did not agree with it. He spoke of thought and reason, and they shuddered at his impious indifference to ancient, holy barbarity. He told them that reason would profit by religion's dissensions, and that it would be in vain that Luther, Calvin, Beza, Jurieu, Melancton, Bullinger, and Farel, would try to make the secular authorities continue to persecute those who did not agree with the reformed catholic faith. He spoke of liberty, and they wondered what he meant. He spoke of life that does not consist



only in living. He changed himself into the form of a naked woman, and spoke of beauty. He spoke of architecture, which was not gorgeously gloomy, mind-confusing, fretted with infinite detail, but clear as reason, serene, and harmonious. He spoke of poetry, and told them how for centuries yet actors would be buried like dogs and refused all marriage ceremonies; how Racine's epitaph would apologise because he wrote dramatic poetry. He spoke of pity and sympathy, which know no sects or classes or nations.

He appeared to them in the form of Christ on the Cross. Drop by drop the blood of Jesus fell. He showed them the imaginary horror of it. "This," he said, "this is the good shepherd, who leads the goats to hell. Wailing and gnashing of teeth and everlasting torment for all who never heard of him. Woe to all who think it untrue! Woe to all who think it unjust! Those who cannot understand his words shall be punished for time without end, for an inconceivably long time. It were better to fall into the hands of the most unjust and cruel tyrant than to disagree with Jesus and to be condemned by his love. Woe to all who do not flatter the unknown god! Woe to those who are full! woe to those who are happy! Everlasting fire shall burn those who laugh, for God has no pleasures except listening to flattery and torturing."

He burnt himself as a sacrifice and asked them of what use it was to them? They collected his ashes in memory of his words, and danced round the place where he had stood, dancing round in the contrary direction to the sun's course.

"O Satan," I said, "you know that since I have thought for myself I have served none but you; and you understand that it is not easy to serve you, for I must have three meals a day if I am to do any decent work, and I like some tea as well; help me, O Satan, for you are my god. Just as all the gods, who have previously been conquered, became devils and demons, unclean and illegal, and the practices of defeated religions became witchcraft, sorcery, and superstitions, and their prayers become degraded to incantations, charms, and invocations, so to me is God a harmful being who protects established dishonesty and respectable fraud; his prayers and psalms, the reading of his law, and the misunderstood study of his sacred books, are superstitions and frenzies, means of hindering men

from properly directed efforts, of wasting their lives and deceiving them to misuse their noblest emotions and powers; O Satan, help me: let him never rest until he be destroyed."

While I prayed thus the witches went home. Some gathered herbs on the way, before the sun rose, herbs with which the devil taught them to heal the sick, who ought only to be healed by holy relics and God's mercy. Some injured their enemies by piercing their footprints with nails, by injuring what was part of them. When they were near home they returned to their human forms, saying, if in the form of a hare:

"Hare, hare, God send thee care,  
I am in a hare's likeness just now,  
But I shall be in a woman's likeness even now."

So day returned; toil and idleness awoke. In the monastery the saintly author resumed his labour.

The holy fathers, so wrote one of these degraded beings, "hated their lives in this world in order to keep them to life eternal. . . . What vigorous abstinence did they use. In the day they laboured and in the night they attended to continual prayer. It is better for a man to live privately and *to have regard to himself* than to neglect his soul, though he could work wonders in the world. Could you see all things present before thine eyes, what were it but a vain sight? Shut thy door upon thee, and call unto thee Jesus, thy beloved." He will "admit of no rival"; "you cannot have two joys"; "it is impossible to take your pleasure here in this world and after that to reign with Christ. The more the flesh is wasted by affliction so much the more is the spirit strengthened by inward grace." "You shall be more acceptable to God" the more and more grievous things "you are allowed to suffer for him." For the love of God, for the glory of God, suffer; I will give, he says, everlasting reward for a short labour: "be watchful over yourself, stir up yourself, admonish yourself, and whatever becomes of others, neglect not yourself."<sup>1</sup>

This was unbearable. I looked elsewhere and saw a trial for witchcraft. The court wore close-fitting caps and long gowns, with sleeves wide at the shoulders, from which inner sleeves emerged. Their beards were dyed. In the places of honour the noblemen and gentry wore wide

<sup>1</sup> "The Imitation of Christ," attributed to Thomas à Kempis.

sleeves slashed, so as to show the gorgeous lining, and wide trunk hose, stuffed out so that they seemed to have tiny waists ; at their necks and wrists they wore ruffs.

The charge against the prisoner was read, accusing her of the using of witchcraft, of being continually in familiarity with the devil and with fairies at all times, as she thought expedient, and thereby dealing with charms and abusing the people with her devilish craft of sorcery against the laws of God and man ; and that she did make pictures of clay and shoot at them with elf-arrow heads,<sup>1</sup> in order by such devilish means to do injury to the people depicted. And it told how she, by burying a man who was sick, and then pronouncing certain charms, did substitute his brother for him, so that he recovered and the brother died ; did tie up a toad by the heels and collect the poison which dropped from its mouth in an oyster shell, and did place that poison on a hankerchief, and "so bewitched him, to whom the said linen belonged," and gave "him such extraordinary pains, as though he had lain on sharp thorns and ends of needles." And how she did cure a sick child by wrapping it in a cloth with certain unguents and other enchanted matters, and by saying charms over it. And did transfer a fever from a woman to a fowl, and then, burning the fowl, healed the woman. The witnesses were called. Charles Pollok, cooper, deposed how the accused once quarrelled with a man about a dog, and said in her rage : "I vow to God I will do thee an evil turn." Another woman witnessed how she had healed the baby. The accused declared that as she would answer to the living God of heaven and earth, so she was innocent of all dealings with the devil. She had indeed healed the baby by the use of herbs and words but had not known that they were wicked. By command of the court she was removed for torture. They scourged her until there was no skin on her back. They put her feet in the iron boots and heated them in a furnace for forty-eight hours. Trembling, weeping, with broken words she confessed. But afterwards she revoked her confession, saying that she had confessed because she had suffered. They put the iron bridle in her mouth, which has two prongs that go into the tongue and palate and two that go into the cheeks, and skilful persons were employed to keep her from sleeping. After three days and nights she became delirious, and answered just as they wished.

<sup>1</sup> Flint-arrow heads supposed to belong to fairies.

But afterwards she revoked, and said passionately : " I am innocent—I am innocent, and shall so answer at the day of judgment, when God will see all. I am innocent of any point of witchcraft—what will you do to torment me now ? —I am not a witch and never saw the devil."

They then cut all the hair off her in order to find the devil's mark, where the devil had licked her with his tongue. And they pricked her until they found that place in which she neither bled nor felt anything. But since, despite her cruel torments, she would not confess, they put her charred feet in boots and bruised them so "that the blood and marrow spouted forth in great abundance." But she, being incapable of further pain, and her nerves utterly exhausted, fell asleep while they were torturing her. And she never properly woke again. Another woman, who had confessed after being laid on burning straw with a red hot iron placed on her mouth, was burnt with her, but broke loose from the stake and had to be put back into the fire. She thereupon blasphemed and renounced her baptism.

Drop by drop the saving blood of Jesus fell. Some of the angels sang "Holy," while others answered "Blessed." Hymning the triune deity of light and love, the angels flattered the blaze of God that proceeded from above. The starry multitudes said "Praise ye the Lord."

I was very angry.

From the earth also rose praises to the lord : praises from saints and praises from subservient multitudes. Holy men, cut off from all worldly care, and free, so far as mortal can be free from earthly corruption, living in holy poverty, guided by holy humility, and refreshed, without doubt, by heavenly visions revealed through open, jewelled gates, shall they not bring flaming words, the fine fruits of passion gained by long and weary meditations, and kindle in the breasts of their audience, as a reward for their own silent efforts towards purity from earthly stains, the delicious fire of religious love, filling the holy house of God with flames of fiery fervour, moving the crowded multitude nearer to heaven and to their own monastic, spiritual, magnificence? If, children of an unhappy age, you would reverently draw near, surely the words of the preacher monk would effectually kill in you all the little seeds of doubt, thought, and restlessness, which are apt to spring up in the minds of all who are born in

this pitiable age of increasing knowledge and melancholy progress, and restore you to barbaric childishness and holy savagery.

"The anger of the Lord shall burn them," so did the holy monk speak. "The Lord has sworn to bring on them darkness, to make them grope by day: the Lord, the Lord has sworn to rob them, to strip them bare; he will send pestilence and sword and famine to consume them, and all the diseases of Egypt which they feared: he will rot them, he will make them long for death, he will break them: in the morning they shall say: 'Would that it were evening,' and in the night: 'Would that it were morning': the whole head shall be faint, the whole body sick. For they are the enemies of God, the murderers of Christ. And are they faint and are they poor and are they utterly drowned in misery? Alas and alas! Although we forbid them to possess lands and houses, and keep them from doing any business with us, yet do they contrive by forbidden trades to gather money and to purchase life; although we forbid them to continue to heal us and to remove from us the healing of God's mercy and of the blessed influence of the holy men whose relics are consigned to our care, for the sake of those few things which are needed by the flesh and demanded by our pitiful, earthly bodies; although (praise be to heavenly light and to the manifest action of the Holy Spirit) our gracious highness has been pleased to take from them all those public offices which it is so unfitting that they should enjoy in our midst; although, that the infectious foulness of their damnable state should be a scorn and a hissing and a byword and a reproach in the mouths of all who pass by, it has been ordered, in accordance with the will of our holy Father, that they shall at all times be marked with a badge and forbidden to imitate the dress of the Christian; yet do they not continue to offend our eyes with their bodies and by no means waste away and disappear; is not their pride, their blasphemy, their strength, their hatred for all Christians, their greed, their enmity to us among whom they live and thrive, are not these things clear in spite of any hypocritical show of brokenness and of weakness, which they may deceitfully assume? Are they not rats, thieves, vermin?—do they not refuse to worship the loving and most excellent Jesus, the Lamb of God, the divine Man of Sorrows, the ever-bleeding

sacrifice, the all-merciful son of our most pitiful lady? Should they not be expelled like rats, and made to suffer innumerable pains? God has said, though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them, and though they climb to heaven, thence will I bring them down. They shall not be utterly destroyed, but made to suffer: for to the wicked there is no rest. Let us lift up our hands against them, let us spare them not; the Lord will account it for a merit to us: let us oppress them and make their lives thin and barren of all happiness, lest the Lord should bring affliction upon us all.

"Then, through the merit of Jesus Christ, may the Holy Spirit descend from the Lord and rest upon you."

The holy words were not in vain.

From the brown stone houses the smoke rose into the clear, pale blue sky, where the quiet clouds floated. Sparkles of light fell here and there on the upper parts of leaves; amid the green tracery there were depths of darker and cooler green. Suddenly a cry.

As their enemies were so barbarous in their attacks and so much more numerous than themselves, many of the Jews with admirable wisdom committed suicide and killed those who were most dear to them; mothers smashed the heads of their babies against walls, and husbands strangled those who had so often caressed and considered and consoled them; those who were most honoured were killed by men of authority.

(In heaven the angels praised the Lord; some of the angels sang "Holy," while others answered "Blessed.")

Pious Christians tore babies from their mothers' arms in order to have them baptised and brought up as Christians among strangers. Some of the Jews, caring less for the attempt to kill them than for the constant effort to oppress and degrade and make their lives without life, resisted and fought; they shut the gates of the ghetto and went into the citadel that stood at the entrance. Their assailants had no adequate means of assaulting the doors and walls, and so set fire to woodwork in various places. The fear of fire seized those who were in houses: the hot breath frightened them and smoke made them turn sick and breathless: its demon fingers seized them. Its hot fingers broke the struggling flesh; noisily it drank the blood.

By devious ways, quickly, fearfully, some of the Jews

left the city ; hoping (and with good reason) to find protection from nobles in return for large payments.

Hymning the triune deity of light and love, the angels flattered the sunny blaze of God that proceeded from above. And the holy creatures, rising and falling, rushing to and fro, praised the Lord. They each had four faces and four bodies and many wings, and their bodies and wings, were joined together ; and as they had four pairs of legs they never needed to turn but went forward in any direction. They had four hands under their wings. The four faces of each of them were like the face of a man, the face of an ox, the face of a lion, and the face of an eagle. And there were four of them. They were of the colour of burnished brass, and a fiery brightness like lightning moved among them. And under them were wheels of the colour of beryl : and each wheel was formed of two wheels, one joined to the other at right angles to it, so that each wheel needed never to turn, but could go forward in any direction. And the souls of the holy creatures were in the wheels, so that when the creatures went the wheels went, and when the creatures stood the wheels stood, and when the creatures rose in the air the wheels rose. And the rims of the wheels were full of eyes.<sup>1</sup>

Would it not be useless to endeavour to describe the singing of the heavenly choirs ? It was like fairy gold, that is but dirt when you would spend it ; it was like the beauties that we see unexpectedly, in the midst of the pains of dull, ugly life, and that cannot be recalled when we have hurried past them ; it was like happiness ; like the palm-trees of Dalmene and the towers of Utopia ; like a jewel of price set in a border of art ; they all continually praised the Lord and magnified and extolled him from beyond the ends of eternity and throughout eternity and from everlasting to everlasting.

But when the sweet-smelling smoke of so many offerings rose before the Lord from the burning of heretics and Jews and the mingled cry of pain reached heaven, the starry eyes closed in horror, and suddenly the endless hymns of the heavenly choirs were broken by a discordant silence. The holy creatures stood still with folded wings, and the starry eyes of the wheels were shut ; the whole heavens blinked into darkness, so that the rays of God could not make bright the vast spaces. Then the voice of a trumpet

<sup>1</sup> See Ezekiel i.

was heard exceedingly loud ; a whirlwind seemed to shake the universal all, and thunder moved over the heavens, so that every heart quaked ; and from the heights God spoke :

"Why are you silent ? Is not the world ruled according to my will ? Can I not destroy you ? I am the Lord."

They all again continually praised the Lord and magnified him with great love and fervour ; some of them sang "Holy," while others answered "Blessed," and those who were near to him sang "Holy and Blessed" ; from beyond the ends of eternity rose praises to this triune deity of light and love from endless multitudes of holy beings.

The starry multitudes said : "Praise ye the Lord. Hallelujah ; praise the Lord with the drum, praise the Lord with the trumpet ; praise the Lord with the trombone, praise the Lord with the harmonium : hallelujah. Praise the Lord with sense, praise him who dwells above the seraphim, the ineffable effulgence of the inane mystery, murky through the iridescence of the inconceivable incandescence of his love, coruscating with cerulean, crystalline serenity—praise him with soul-enveloping inspirations of sustaining nonsense : hallelujah, hallelujah."

"God," I said, "you are injurious and a tyrant, although you are only a dream, a being of the mind, and made after the likeness of the human mind. Men shall not for ever be deceived with the old errors. If I am not right why don't you explain your Bible better than I do ; without some further explanation we cannot understand it."

There was a rumbling as though the gates of heaven were closing, a flash as of a sword and the moving of a strong arm, a sound as of a thousand demons laughing—and I awoke.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chief authorities used on witchcraft are Ennemoser's "History of Magic" and Pitcairn's "Criminal Trials in Scotland." The witchcraft proceedings are idealised and generalised ; they are not true to any single place or time, but I think that I have invented none of them ; and it is so also with the riot against the Jews.



## IV

"How very hard it is to be  
A Christian."

ROBERT BROWNING.

"Even here we have a sort of living to get, and must buffet it somewhat longer."—HENRY THOREAU.

JESUS taught concerning money :

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth ; take no thought for your life what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor for your body what you shall put on ; a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven ; *woe unto you that are rich* ; woe unto you that are full, for you shall hunger ; sell that which you have and give alms ; labour not for the meat which perishes ; he that forsakes not all that he has cannot be my disciple. There was a certain rich man who fared sumptuously every day, and so when he died went to hell, for (as Abraham told him) during his life he had received good things, now should he suffer while the poor were comforted in heaven ;<sup>1</sup> for prostitutes shall sooner enter the kingdom of heaven than you bishops and people of social position. If you will be perfect go and sell everything you have, and take no thought for to-morrow ; for to purchase the kingdom of heaven you must sell all you have, as a man sells all to buy the field in which gold is buried, or the particularly goodly pearl.

Jesus taught concerning government :

If any man sue you at law, and take away your cloak, let him have your coat also ; *do not resist evil* ; if any man smite you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also ; and if any man take away your goods, do not ask for them again ;<sup>2</sup> and if any force you to go one mile with him, go with him two miles ; agree with your opponent quickly.

Jesus taught concerning the unimportance of all material things, and the power and possible sufferings of the soul :

If your eye cause you to sin, pluck it out ; all things are possible to him who believes ; if you have as much faith as

<sup>1</sup> See St Luke xvi. 19. The rich man is accused of no sin save riches ; he passively neglected a certain poor man Lazarus, but it is not said that he ever *refused* him anything.

<sup>2</sup> St Luke vi. 30.

a grain of mustard seed, nothing is impossible; pray, believing, and you shall receive what you asked for;<sup>1</sup> what good is it if a man gain the whole world and lose his soul? if your brother (Christian) sin against you, and refuse to hear you, he shall be damned in heaven when you damn him on earth, and be like a heathen or a tax-gatherer, for *that which two or three (Christians) pray for shall always be granted*;<sup>2</sup> he that is able to avoid marrying, let him do so for the sake of heaven;<sup>3</sup> for they that have not believed in Jesus shall come forth before "this generation has passed away," to the resurrection of damnation, of casting into everlasting fire, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, and burning; he that loses his (physical) life, shall save his (spiritual) life; the kingdom of heaven is within you; my kingdom is not of this world; he that does not believe in Jesus shall not see life, but the anger of God shall rest on him;<sup>4</sup> for the wicked shall be cast into a furnace of fire; he that believes and is baptised shall be saved, he that does not believe shall be damned; and these are the signs that follow belief: In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; if they drink poison it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and so cure them. Thus taught Jesus. Is not this a doctrine which would end all government and all work? I am confounded and disgusted by the inconsistency and hypocrisy of those professing to seriously follow him.

Of course, I know that in the climate of Palestine, and in the particular state of the society which surrounded Jesus, it was much easier to live without money than it is in our unsettled climate, in our ugly towns, and in our complex civilisation, where literally everything is the private property of an individual. I understand that Jesus was a dreamer and a Galilean, an exaggerating Oriental; that exaggeration is an effective way of teaching; that he seems to have been a man, and probably excitable, and therefore that he sometimes said one thing, sometimes the opposite; that he did not always mean his words to be literally fulfilled; that to him every occurrence was supernatural, because he had little idea of an order in natural events; that he knew very

<sup>1</sup> St Luke xxi. 22.

<sup>2</sup> St Luke xviii. 15. "Rabbi Chanceno Ben Teradion said. . . . But when two sit together and talk of the Law, the Divine Presence is with them."

<sup>3</sup> St Luke xix. 10.

<sup>4</sup> St John iii. 36.

little about the Pharisees and the Scribes. But why, then, is he the light of the *world*? why the way by which all ages shall find heaven? If he was a man, let us examine his words, and reject what is not entirely true, what is not always true. *But if he was God, must not his every word be the exact truth, not addressed to any special time or place?* must we not make a system of life, by which we shall, as nearly as we can, obey everything that he said?—for where he seems to contradict himself we must have failed in understanding him.

To me it appears that what he said about the foreign government of the Romans, which was never recognised as just by most of the Jews, signifies nothing to us; that his ideas about the soul are contrary to all experience; and that his teaching about money and about faith can only practically lead to a pathetic selfishness, since it is by work and by thought that we can help each other. In England to-day it will be generally agreed that those who are protected by government must help it by protecting themselves in legal methods against injustice and by trying to perfect the laws: they must not give their coat to the thief who stole their cloak. In short, respecting the teaching of Jesus, I agree with the majority; not perhaps with what they say but with what they do. A heroic minority have often taken "the sublime paradoxes of Jesus literally."<sup>1</sup> The early Christians, the Ebionites, St Francis of Assisi, numerous mendicant orders, and the communistic sects of the middle ages (Pauvres de Lyon, Bégards, Bons-Hommes, Fatricelles, and so forth) endeavoured to realise the ideal of poverty.

Greatly to the injury of their health, ardent minds have sought to know the truth by faith. But truth is not to be found by an impatience which would at once know; which is not willing to work, day by day, taking part in the needs and necessities inherited in common by the present race of men, but wishing to be inspired, to assist the central life of all (as though, do what we will with an appearance of freedom, we can do other than we must, unless in us, contrary to all experience, effects are unconnected with causes); it is not to be found by an unhealthy habit of life and emptiness of stomach; not from too persistent meditations on one theme, too much reasoning from an atom of foundation; not by an unwillingness to receive the only impressions from without which are possible to our in-

<sup>1</sup> Renan's "Life of Jesus."

dividual states of nerves and surroundings. Truth is to be found by observation and by reason—true reason being a process which conforms with the outward order of things.

“The kingdom of God is within you.” It is true to some extent. In actual life it is very hard to give both muscle and mind their due shares of nourishment. The destruction of the imagination—that is the bitterest consequence of continued physical pain. We all seek mental excitement by being “born again,” and so adopting a new and passionate view of life, or by drinking brandy, or by injecting morphia, or by reading, or perhaps by falling in love. But when a man’s feelings and imaginations distort or even obliterate the sensations conveyed to him from without by his senses, we usually call him mad.

The fact is that “there are various tough problems yet to be solved, and we must make shift to live, betwixt spirit and matter, such a human life as we can. A healthy man, with steady employment, as wood-chopping at fifty cents a cord, and a camp in the woods, will not be a good subject for Christianity. The New Testament may be a choice book to him on some, but not on all or most of his days. He will rather go a-fishing in his leisure hours.”<sup>1</sup>

Finally, pious reader, if you go to the bank, reflect on the words: Lay not up for yourselves treasures, take no thought for your life, woe unto you that are full. When you see a policeman or a soldier, reflect on the words: Of him that takes away your goods do not ask them again;<sup>2</sup> give your coat to him who takes your cloak; whoever shall say to his brother “You fool” shall be in danger of hell fire; I say to you “You shall not resist evil.” When you go to church, reflect on the words: Whatever two or three ask for shall always be granted; *if you have faith you shall say to this mountain “Remove hence,” and it shall remove.* And when you say your prayers remember the words: Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and yet do not that which I said?<sup>3</sup> As it was written by Isaiah concerning the words of the Lord, which he heard in a vision:

“Bring no more vain oblations; even your solemn meetings are iniquity. My soul hates your religious holidays; they are a trouble to me; I am tired of them. Wash yourselves and make yourselves clean; put away evil deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil.

<sup>1</sup> Henry Thoreau’s “A Week on the Concord.”

<sup>2</sup> St Luke vi. 30.

<sup>3</sup> St Luke vi. 46.

"Learn to do well ; seek justice ; relieve the oppressed."<sup>1</sup>

Pity those who suffer. Pity those who grow bloodless with poor food and too much indoor confinement and the dulness of monotonous drudgery and the necessity of working when they are ill. Admire those who appear cheerful when they are sad and ill, who struggle to earn a living for others dependent on them. In this you may be disciples of Jesus, Moses, Isaiah, Buddha, and Plato, and also of Jesus, son of Sirath, of Hillel, and of Antigonus of Soco, whose sayings influenced Jesus, the son of Joseph (called Christ), and of all the others who have taught :—love one another, return good for evil.

And remember that we call a man mad if he rely too implicitly on the kingdom within him, and let it have little relation to the world outside, if feelings and imaginations distort or obliterate his perceptions.

## V

"And I gave my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom concerning everything that is done under heaven. . . . I sought in my heart, to give myself unto wine, yet still acquainting my heart with wisdom ; and to lay hold of folly that I might see what were best for the sons of men, that they should do it under heaven all the days of their life. (I) considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun ; (I) saw the tears of those oppressed and without a comforter ; and on the side of their oppressors was power, but they had no comforter. Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life. . . . (and) whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might."—ECCLESIASTES.

"And what magnanimous spirit but sees how unworthy of man and God alike is virtue out of self-interest, the eternity of joys offered by" (almost) "every creed to those who, during a few brief hours of existence, fulfil certain monstrous and often unnatural conditions?"—DE BALZAC.

HAVING, to my own satisfaction, shown that miracles do not occur and that the moral teaching of the Bible is not a reliable guide, I shall try in an imaginary dialogue to show how we may be helped towards right conduct without supernatural inspiration or revelation. The persons whom I have to introduce to you are :

John Christian, aged twenty-two ; brown hair and eyes ; a healthy, pink complexion ; nose, short, rather thick, and

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah i. 14.

straight; a mouth that may become coarse in later life, and a very rudimentary moustache. His chin is small but square, and the angles when the jawbones slope down from cheek to chin are squarely marked. His favourite amusements are lawn-tennis and boating. He is easily amused, and it would take him a week to understand one of Euclid's propositions. But if he had to travel across Africa or put a gold mine, hidden in an almost unexplored border of India, into working order, he would probably succeed. He hates the French, and belongs to the Church of England. He is a kind-hearted and excellent companion, but does not understand subtle emotion. He will never know love, but is destined to be an excellent husband and father. His religion is his deepest feeling, and he never examines it. I think it must have been owing to considerable emotion that he spoke about it in the following conversation. Probably he liked the third person of my dialogue. He usually speaks in a loud voice and a determined manner.

William Smith, aged thirty-seven; brown hair becoming scanty; red face, with pale bluish grey eyes; carefully tended moustache; a nose with a slight bump at the upper end and a slightly tilted point; cheeks somewhat too suggestive of good meat and good wine; well dressed, but his clothes seem too glossy. His favourite amusements are dining well, going to the theatre, and talking to successful men or people in a good position. He is never very much amused, and very seldom unhappy or in a bad temper. He is an amiable but careless father and husband. He boasts about all his smaller successes—what Lord A. once said to him, and what he once told Miss B., the notorious actress—but he never tells anyone whatever of the generous deeds that he has done. He is, in fact, incorrigibly generous—forced to give money to those whom he pities. He is of some account in the city, being partner of a well-known firm, and a common councillor. He hates poetry, but has read many biographies, books of travel, and novels. In politics he is a Conservative; in religion a superstitious agnostic, who goes to church.

And, thirdly, Dennis Drayton (the chief character of my dialogue), aged forty-three; black hair and eyebrows and dark eyes; straight nose; a coarse but firm mouth and a heavy moustache; rather square face, but chin small in proportion to forehead. The skin of his face is somewhat

loose and moulded into numerous hollows and projections—marks of want, disease, sin, effort, genius, misery, and success. The *Athenæum* (in reviewing his last novel, "Life's Tragic Comedy") says: "He seems to have an acquaintance with every man's business, and after showing us the banker reading his private ledgers or hurrying 'on 'Change,' the unfortunate workman without work, lingering round the steamy window of the eating-house and listening to the customers who hurriedly take their knives and forks out of the wooden boxes and carry them to an open space at one of the tables, together with the food which they have bought at the counter (for at the restaurants of the poor every man is his own waiter), he transports us to the library of the clergyman who begins to doubt that sacred faith whose history he had begun to chronicle with so much enthusiasm. We do not hesitate to say that we hope that Mr Drayton will become an English Balzac, without those faults which sometimes make Balzac almost tedious." In early life Drayton ran away from home and became a sailor. In distant towns he became acquainted with starvation and with dull misery—the fundamental unpleasant sensations by which man is ultimately governed. However, he afterwards accepted help from his family, and, learning shorthand, became a journalist. He has known the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all the covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh; he has seen men striving for money and cheating one another; he has seen the dishonesty of those advantaged by office and authority. He has no personal hopes and no pleasures except work—the joy of forgetting everything by creating. The conversation took place at Drayton's rooms after dinner. The table was still covered with a white table-cloth and with glasses and other remains of dinner. Over the small fireplace the wall is painted dark green, and there are two portraits representing Darwin and Shakespeare; all the rest of the walls is covered with books, save where green curtains in front of the windows shut out the London street and prevent the lamplight from revealing the room to passers-by. Opposite to the fireplace, in front of which sat Christian, is a large open bookcase: most of the covers of the books in it are of those beautiful and delicate colours which calf bindings acquire when they fade and are exposed to air and dust,—such colours as golden brown, silvery grey, greenish purple, and mingled with these are more solid

tints, little elderly volumes in sober dulled black cloth or in brown leather, which are becoming covered with a network of paler cracks, making the covers scaly, like the bark of a tree. A few strong colours—crimson, purple, dark scarlet, and glossy gold—mark new bindings of calf or morocco. Nearer the window is a more decorated bookcase, covered with doors, but in the upper part the books seductively glance through glass. Within are some bindings by masters: as where this coat-of-arms of a French countess forms the centre of a panel covered with a simple diaper of sprigs; or here, where open spaces of untooled leather contrast with more complex arrangements of slender intertwining boughs (it is a binding by Nicolas Eve); or here, where the border and central ornament are outlined firmly and filled with irregularly disposed miscellaneous fragments of ornaments (it is by an English binder, whose name I forget). On the other side of the central bookcase are wider shelves. These large folios—handle them with care—are a copy of the Talmud. I think the pages are very pretty, with their small centres of large type text, surrounded by different commentaries and commentaries on commentaries, each printed in a different Hebrew type. This is a very rare folio ("only known copy in Bodleian," you will read in catalogues that mention the book). These large black and gold volumes are Christian fathers. You may imagine that Drayton had to study many theological books in order to describe the tortured mind of the industrious historian, who could not believe his faith supreme and inspired when he came to trace out its history, its effects, and the directions in which it has moved and is moving. Not fit for youths and virgins, but lively and elegant are the engravings in that eighteenth-century copy of Boccaccio. Near it—such is the peaceful republic of letters—a "Whole Duty of Man," several tedious Puritans, and Law's "Serious Call."

Drayton sighed.

"Hullo, sighing? Why do you sigh?" said Christian.

"I was thinking. It says somewhere 'of what advantage is it if a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul?'"

"None: not the slightest advantage," said Christian.

"But you pretend to be an atheist?"

"Never mind about that. But this I think, anyhow,—it is of no advantage to gain the whole world, if in gaining it, you lose the power of enjoying it."



"Of course I think," said Christian softly, "that to have Christ is happiness: there is no other enjoyment. How else can you know what it is right to do; how can you be happy unless you are virtuous?"

"What is virtue?" said Drayton.

"It is the performance of the will of God," answered Christian.

"Is it in accordance with the will of God that we should help one another to be strong and healthy and to live, or that we should decrease the vigour, the living consciousness, the happiness of one another?"

"We should love one another," said Christian.

"And I may assume that we should love one another by helping each other to live and not to die?"

"Yes; please assume that for the present."

"And I may also assume that in general (apart from certain exceptions) the sign of a vigorous life is the *enjoyment* of life? For health, eating, good digestion, good spirits, are more enjoyable than disease, indigestion, starvation, or craving, and those creatures must tend to survive whose pleasures are most healthy. So that when I said we should help one another to live and not to die I might have said we should help one another to be happy."

"It seems so."

"So a virtuous man should do everything that helps others to be healthy in body and in mind and that gives them healthy pleasures?"

"Yes."

"Now the health and happiness of our descendants will be inherited by them in the structures of their brains and bodies from us, from our powers, and the results of our activities. It follows, then, from what I have said, that the virtuous man, who intends to have children, ought to be healthy and happy?"

"Yes," said Christian.

"But our contemporaries—can they be happy if we are unhappy? So that no one can be happy till all are happy?"

"Yes," said Christian.

"Then the virtuous man is happy? For he desires to make those around him or his descendants happy?"

"You are right. I would have granted it at once," said Christian.

"But you would not have granted that pleasure meant pleasure. And if a man cannot be entirely virtuous in a

world that is only slowly evolving upwards he should yet strive to be as virtuous or happy as possible? He will try to give pleasure by being pleased?"

"Yes," said Christian.

"It is therefore the business of a moralist to tell men how they may become happy. But I could only offer a little advice.

"It is said in Plato's 'Republic' that in future:—'let our artists . . . be those who are gifted to discern the true nature of the beautiful and graceful; then will our youth dwell in a land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, shall flow into eye and ear, like a health-giving breeze from a purer region.' The perfect state is that in which every man does his work with pleasure and by means of it gives pleasure to others. Every virtuous man will enjoy his food, and be polite. The republic of every man's mind will be harmonious; every faculty within him doing its work. And this is one of the ways to attain happiness—for men are likely to be miserable when their minds are one-sided, only able to enjoy one kind of activity. If through ill-health or poverty or uncongenial companions, or even an alteration of their character, the power of imagining, reasoning, observing, admiring pictures or books, be taken from them, their entire power of being happy or useful may leave them. The virtuous man will be a complete man. He will reason much—balancing to-day's gratification with the future of humanity—yet foreseeing that self-sacrifice is a vice when it weakens his powers of future service to men, and still more when it serves only to injure himself. On the other hand, if I think I am writing a masterpiece that will educate humanity, I may deliberately refuse to spend time in pleasing and amusing and making gay those around me. The artist, the man with a mission, the philanthropist, the inventor, refuses to allow himself to be distracted by a petty and weakly yielding unselfishness. Unselfishness is often composed of irresolution, weakness, and cowardice—it is afraid to refuse and to leave its owner free to do his own work. Hence sons unselfishly yield to their fathers' wishes and waste their own lives with unsuitable occupations that tempt them in weariness, disgust, and disappointment to vicious pleasures and to languidness.

"And yet, on the other hand and at the present day, to consume luxuries is to make bread more expensive for

the starving. A man must not enjoy anything that does not help him to be healthy in body and mind, else he will render others less healthy. He must not overwork himself, despite symptoms of failing health, lest he become an invalid, a burden, and unable to work at all. Pale faces, marked by curious hollows and projecting muscles; mottled complexions, like old brocade that once perhaps was gold or purple, or like fawn or cream, but now is brownish yellow, pale, indescribable; stunted, wasted forms; stolid, anæmic, expressionless faces, bounded by flattened curves—these are hateful signs of immoral overwork, of too little nourishing food and of too little amusement. The pimpled, swollen nose outside the public-house tells me of a dull life—to-morrow always as wearisome as to-day; and why therefore should I not forget and have the excitement of being drunk? The weak must be killed or sterile; weak babies ought to be killed; sad, weak people ought to be helped to commit suicide; people too ill to eat or madly desirous of a violent death ought to be allowed to die, not made to suffer and to live and, by living, to make others sad, and perhaps even to produce sad children. Unfortunately (it is well known that), God likes us to suffer as long as possible and promises us heaven if we do not try to escape earthly suffering; but will future generations of weak and miserable children accept this selfish excuse from us? According to Herbert Spencer murder is the greatest crime against justice, since it not only interferes with the liberty of action which should be equally possessed by everyone, but it entirely destroys all power to act.<sup>1</sup> But the classes of people whom I have mentioned can only be regarded as having very little or no desire to act—they are only hindrances to other people's actions: it is therefore a greater injustice to allow them to live than it would be to kill them. You must not misunderstand me: of course, I do not wish to increase the number of ordinary and unjust murders. The only people who ought always to be killed (so, at least, it is usually said) are helpless savages armed with spears and arrows and swords, who can be destroyed with shells and the latest inventions of civilised men, in order to make room for a superior race (which in its own country forbids the strong prize-fighter to replace the weak one or the pauper to starve), and in order that the gospel of love may be spread and trade increased; and again, such

<sup>1</sup> "Principles of Ethics," Vol. II. ix

enemies to our own country, who not only possess lands flowing with milk and honey and very desirable, but who also dare to talk more rudely than diplomatically, and are smaller than we are: such peoples, I say, may be murdered and their lands stolen in order that we may govern them properly; as it is said: 'Love your enemies . . . do good to them that hate you.'

"But it's not true, it's not true. Before you talk any more nonsense kindly listen to me," Christian said. "It is obviously untrue and contrary to experience that pleasures are healthy."

"I think you agreed that they are generally virtuous and most of them *are* healthy. But in the struggle for existence circumstances may change faster than inherited structures can become modified to suit them. In the end the people best suited to the circumstances must have advantages over and tend to exterminate the others. Meantime, I inherit from restlessly active ancestors who ate large meals at irregular intervals, a desire for food which is unsuited to a languid life and temperament: eating gives me pleasures, and if I, regarding present pleasure more than anticipated indigestion and consequent interruption to my other pleasures and purposes, eat as much as I like, I eat more than I need. Our changing ideas of pleasure lag behind our changing social circumstances."

"Let me say something," said Smith (a sensible man, who knew something of the world), "and let me (speaking as a man of the world) say it quite plainly. Personally, I quite agree with some of what you have said. But suppose that you were like the workman you have described, with a wretched home, a querulous wife, little food, a pain in your stomach, crying children, and every day's work as wearisome as to-day's. Would it be of any use to talk to you about the evolution of society, about the good of the coming generations of humanity, even about the sufferings directly caused by drink? The man has no motive for self-restraint unless you can excite him with the love of God and talk to him, as parsons do talk, about what Jesus wishes and how he loved us and such emotional matters. It is just because they talk of the startling, the miraculous, the romantic, the distant, that the weary, the wretched, the miserable listen to them. Or again, suppose you are dull and lust after a woman: which is the better

restraint in most cases, reason which forsakes you when you most need it (that is, when your blood is hot), or your chance memory of a fine piece of sacred music or a verse from the Bible?"

"Well, your question really needs many answers. You seem to be suggesting that man, unless he is what people call a bore, does not live by reasoning alone, and that feelings are of more practical importance in keeping his conduct moral. But many of these feelings are, I think, the result of reason, of habitual action, and of instinct founded on necessity, and made permanent by the destruction of those who could not acquire it.

"We inherit many feelings (or rather many nervous structures, in which those movements which are called feelings, when seen subjectively, can be excited by appropriate causes). These feelings having been excited in innumerable generations of our ancestors, but in various manners, under very various circumstances, we inherit a mere abstract form of the feeling, an ideal; it is composed of that part of the feeling which was possessed in common by most of our ancestors, which forms a clearer nucleus round which are clustered conflicting and very vague indications of the varying feelings caused by the varying parts of the original circumstances. When first a young man looks back with delight at a woman, and from a distance continues in imagination to reflect on her, love is lit in him, the love which fired all his ancestors down to about the snail (or lower) and showed them a new world.

"He feels an ideal or generalised love, strong yet dreamy, far more true and beautiful than will be his later love, obscured by accident, errors, and disappointments; it exhibits the most powerful or central part of all that his predecessors felt. Each of those predecessors had great need of a very few qualities, physical and mental, in order to complement his own qualities and yield a fairly harmonious and typical offspring; hence there is a tendency for the final descendant to long for the perfect woman, though the needs of his own organisation deflect his ideal. Guided by this desire, all the best qualities of the rest of his mind, which is interconnected structurally with the sexual centre, is awakened; by aid of these awakening qualities he discovers hitherto unseen beauties. Such ideal feelings are supremely true and utterly false; rightly guided, they help him towards the noblest conduct;

neglected and left to their possessor's entirely ignorant view of them, they are fearfully dangerous. Who helps to destroy them is guilty of a great sin. On the other hand, it is a great sin to help people not to see the world as it is, not to look at the basest and most terrible parts of human life at times when we have the power to remedy them. In art both idealism and realism are moral: they help us to discover whence we came, where we are, and whither we go. Of course, viewed from a different point of view, this ideal love exhibits the cruel way in which we are made to live: nature, partly soft and warm like a woman, partly wet and loathsome like a diseased beast, in every case, both with caresses and with blows, forces us on to continue to suffer, to joy, and to live. Now all these ideal feelings, like the love of which I have been speaking, may be powerful friends if they are rightly guided. The man who loves the ideal, or a good woman, will never consciously inflict great injuries on anyone.

"The most powerful and permanent of these moral feelings is perhaps sympathy. All social animals—that is, all animals, which, guided by convenience and by the principle that the 'fittest species survives, come to live together in a hive, a pack, a herd—acquire the feeling of sympathy: they grow hungry and eat together, the success of one adds to the strength of all. In addition to this, the parental instinct, also developed by survival of the fittest (since if a species of animals does not feed its helpless young, it will obviously be supplanted by one that does), rises in time to a stage where a sympathy is felt for the small, the feeble, the helpless—these qualities becoming associated with those who ought to be helped, with the young. Monkeys, bisons, elephants, and crows furnish examples of a decided social morality. Nevertheless, even in man the feeling of sympathy is usually limited to the pack, herd, social class, nation, tribe, or race to which the individual belongs, the sufferings of other classes or herds being viewed with indifference, with pleasure, or with a desire to profit by them: hence the black man is never treated to a white man's morality; in parts of Africa the white man buys a woman for a small sum, and kills a tribe in order to get his baggage transported. Sympathy at its best teaches us that we are all made in the same way: one man is finished a little more than another, and one is subjected to happier, more moral

circumstances than another: but the differences are really trifling, and every one of us is a link in a chain of inexorable effects, an atom among a series of consequences which all flow from the unknown—we are like clay in the hands of the potter, like a thread in the hands of the embroiderer. Indeed, I never could see that I have sinned much—all my faults were so natural, so due to circumstances, so shallow, so little affecting the fundamental excellence of my character; and yet some people hate me. The world is so unsympathetic, so censorious, so spiteful.

“If in myself vices appear so natural, surely virtues must appear admirable in others. I do admire the temperance and the patience of those who work thirteen hours a day or longer at monotonous and desperately dull work, and yet remain benevolent. These old women with cheeks that hang in flaccid folds, these swollen forms wrapped in shawls, or these bony faces showing the square angles of the jawbones and marked by deep wrinkles that cut through the projecting muscles, signs of desperate and coarse pleasures and constant toils, these earth-coloured faces, these quivering limbs, and the deep hollows from which look out the despairing eyes that can hardly see the world which grows faint—(why does not God give that dinner party of which Jesus spoke?)—when I consider how they are kind one to another and how desperately evil is their fate, I admire them. These young eyes, so used to seeing vice, that fled from days of weariness and nights of labour and weeks of idle hunger, when even the difference between human actions and those of a beast became nothing (for all is vanity)—this desperate desire for money, which alone can save from hunger and from dull deadliness—this prostitute appears to me no more sinful than the rest of you. The ideal feeling of sympathy with all living creatures is a real motive for right conduct, whether it impels us to help or to avoid injuring. All morality can be made to rest on expediency, since the happiness of one demands, in a complex state, the happiness of all; but I doubt whether, from a psychological point of view, expediency is often the immediate motive of conduct; more often we dimly feel that like ourselves all creatures are cursed (or is it blessed?) with life,—‘fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means,’ driven onwards by like hunger and by the same needs; and if the righteous

would consider how easily we may all mistake, if they would consider how weak all of us are, they would be humble and blame no one; pity and sympathy would be extended not only to those evidently miserable such as I have mentioned, but to ugly, dull, huckstering, foolish, fribbling, prosperous, gossiping, earthly, tedious, twaddling, prosaic persons, and men would seek each other without expectation of gaining amusement, knowledge, recreation, help or profit. And so needing one another, both for the sake of the purest friendship and for the sake of mutual assistance, a man would avoid sins not only from pity of others whom he could not wish to injure but also from self-pity, since by every evil act our power of enjoying companionship is injured, and the companionship which we might enjoy is made less valuable. If after struggling against a tendency towards an evil act we actually perform it, the more conscious we are of what we do, the greater is the impression of it left in us, the greater is the change of nervous structure in our brain caused by it, and therefore the more likely we are to be again obliged to struggle against the revived idea of the evil; it will thwart us in our subsequent endeavours after other pleasures, other pleasures which, though they may be less in amount or even partly painful, are yet in accordance with the happiness of others, and help in their development, in the increase of their life or actual consciousness, and so would have been associated in our minds with innumerable pleasant social ideas, and would have led to innumerable beautiful fancies. The baser pleasures and the sinful pleasures are associated with nothing—they cannot so much be dreamed about and do not intensify the whole of life,—or else, being obviously injuries, we must associate them with painful ideas; hence a generous deed may give us more pleasure than a good dinner, even though it cost us some painful self-sacrifice. It is an exaggeration to say that the idea of sin is the same as the deed of sin, that lust equals adultery (perhaps it is only the too hasty reader who need suppose that Jesus said so); the idea inflicts no direct and immediate external injury, it only degrades and makes cruel the mind of the subject, but in its effects on the mind of the thinker it is, of course, a faint copy of the sin itself.

“The moralist who will not base his teaching on a revelation, and say, ‘Thus said the Lord,’ usually finds two tasks imposed on himself: one is the comparatively



dull academic task of explaining how by *natural* means mankind acquired moral ideas, which are of benefit to any social, herding animal, and therefore tend to be produced by the extermination of those unfit societies which cannot acquire them. The other task is simply that of examining the actual motives of mankind and explaining how far religion helps them to do good and how *morality* might replace what religion does. It must be remembered that much of our moral and religious instruction is quite unnecessary—the motives for quiet, cheerful lives are simple and strong if we would only not complicate them :

‘ A simple child,  
That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death ? ’

Why teach it that all men can only be saved from some terror (of which we know nothing except what we have read in books) by believing in what we cannot understand, and that a just God caused some mysterious change in the whole fate of men (of which change we have no evidence in history whatever), because he found someone willing to endure an adequate amount of unmerited suffering, and because so long as someone suffered this just God was content. It did not matter to him whether the sufferer were innocent or guilty, the criminal or the criminal's son, the chief offender or an ignorant dupe ; and moreover, if these things are not taught, morality will come to an end, men will murder their fathers in order to get legacies, and all the excellent reasons for preferring virtue to vice, a vigorous life to a lingering death, all that which knowledge of life and a foreseeing view of history can teach, will not move men as much as holy books, which are so Oriental that all Europe cannot agree as to the meaning of the most essential parts of their moral teaching. Love, remorse, every feeling that we all admit to be beneficial,—the atheist as much as anyone else may admit the action of these without explaining their constitution, and may encourage their operation. But, so far as I could ever learn, it was not the most religious ages in which men's feelings were most beneficial. Think of witches, who were tortured——”

“You are digressing,” said Christian.

“I am showing how powerful Christianity has been in past times. If Luther and Wesley, and popes and priests, and

innumerable wise and learned men, judges and witnesses and law-makers,—*if all these men, who all wrote against witches (so much cleverer than I am) were, as you think, mistaken concerning this matter during so many ages—indeed, from the time of Leviticus to the eighteenth century—may we not examine the other ideas which we still inherit*, and boldly confront moral authorities with the evidence of our senses? If they were so infernally mistaken, were it not well to examine in good time *all* the ideas that we inherit from the past, lest it be found that the rules of conduct of too many persons are built on a foundation of sand, and lest when the wind of thought and the rain of evidence sweep away the decaying house of Christianity they take away with it the partly true ideas of vice and virtue which were in it? For even now, though men may trust in rules supported by public opinion and by the Book of God during the winter, and when they are hungry and when they are tired, yet when the sun shines, when every bird sings sonnets to his mistress' eyebrow, when fish fight duels for the sake of a wife and cold-blooded reptiles march home in triumph with a bride—when all nature sings of joy and love—then let theologians and metaphysicians beware lest, weary of words, and not sufficiently understanding the reasons why virtue is better than vice, we run riotous, repealing all laws. Shall not the time come when experience may be other than knowledge of past mistakes?—a time when education will not consist in learning facts and myths but in teaching people to discover the relation between themselves and the world, so that a boy will be taught to see what his probable need of money will be, in what way he is most likely to earn it with pleasure or with least pain, what kind of character he is likely to obtain by so earning it, and in what ways he and the money which he receives, and that which he spends, may influence others; at that time will be avoided our waste of high-minded but false dreams, noble, erroneous enthusiasms and aspirations; and, seeing that happiness is the end of life and of all its labours, many of our present labours will cease, for they add to no one's happiness, to no one's health of body or mind, to no one's knowledge (for knowledge is a means of obtaining life, which consists of an adaptation of our inward being to outward circumstances, and life is a means of obtaining happiness). Our better employments will decrease the number of 'mute inglorious Miltons' and Platos fitted 'to warn, to

comfort, to command,' and fated to add up accounts ; being more capable of expressing a man's powers, our less ugly work will reveal and develop them. As then we become more beautiful in mind friendship will become more valuable and more common ; and friendship is life's greatest pleasure ; it restrains us from acts done out of perversity—acts done because we are alone, and because there is every reason not to do them. Sympathy shows us the faint, persistent dreams that make the happiness of oppressed lives, the devotion that sustains those who work and need together. Look into the world and consider and you will find that it is sympathy that gives strength and will to do good—for there are more reasons for virtue than are known to your religion."

"Yes," said Christian ; "because, apart from revelation, God has implanted in us moral intuitions, a conscience, a sense of duty."

"Well," said Drayton, "I should need a week to clear away your unscientific conceptions. But a little investigation shows that what you suppose is not true. Robbery in Belochistan helps a man and his descendants into heaven ; with many savages unchastity is a virtue, a man will not take as wife a woman whom other men have not cared for. Such ideas of morality are necessary under certain conditions ; where life is very precarious or where massacres by enemies are common the law of the survival of the fittest must produce them. It is obviously advantageous under most circumstances for men to live together rather than for each man to depend on his own exertions for everything that he needs. If men live together it is obviously to the advantage of the chief (if there is a chief) that they should not kill each other ; some customary restraints must be established before there is any advantage in living together. I read lately in a book of travels that a young page of Mtesa's, King of Uganda, who was the son of a subordinate chief, once told the king that he was tired of being a servant and wished to be a chief. 'Oh ! kill your father and you will become a chief,' said Mtesa, and the boy did so. All early religions recommend murder, because in early stages of society warfare is habitual, men live by killing. As reason increases, as society develops, men's needs and their powers of attaining happiness increase. Life becomes more intense and more secure. Strictly speaking, the earliest religions are unmoral ; the

custom of the tribe is more often moral than is the tyranny of the supposed ghost of a great chief or the terrible producer of misfortune. What you term 'moral intuition' is mainly inherited brain structure, in which certain movements, known subjectively as feelings and ideas, are produced by corresponding circumstances. 'In addition to this, the young child is guided by instruction, by approval, and disapproval expressed to itself and others, by association of deeds with punishments and rewards, and by imitation. Conscience is an inherited faculty : it is a part of prejudice, and may be wrong. The sense of duty (as you call it) is, of course, not perfect in any man ; as it has been evolved, so must it be further evolved, and we, by conscious effort, must try to correct and increase it. We must learn that it is not so wrong to carry a cabbage home through the streets without having it wrapped in paper as to make a malicious, hurtful remark ; not the opinion of God or man can make conduct better or worse, but the conduct in itself is hurtful or healthy to others and to ourselves. Morality, religions, societies, arts, they are not sudden creations, but they all grow together in obedience to some single principle. Go where you will, from Plymouth Brethren to Fijians, every unreflective society thinks that its religion and customs are final and perfect. You may prefer Sophocles to Shakespeare, Shakespeare to Tolstoy, but it is undeniable that *in complexity* the art of each age tends to advance beyond that of former ages. One particular form, one element of art having been developed to a high degree, another form or element is developed, and then a third form of art, in which the previous ones are both contained. By the law of the survival of the fittest works of art it must in some way be so. Botticelli is mainly intent on arranging the lines round his figures into patterns, so that every separate line pleases, and all of them combine into a harmonious whole ; Titian would do this, and would also make the sun shine and shadows intensify the colours ; Whistler would do all this, and would also fix your eye on that point which is most essential for the proper understanding of the scene, letting the background be undistractingly out of focus. Beethoven, could he have been born among the Hottentots, could not have produced the music that he has produced, because (unless I am mistaken) the Hottentots only play the tom-tom ; and Jesus, could he be born among us, would probably have given us better instruction than he did in his own time. If

any man take your coat, give him your cloak also—I think that is what Jesus said—you shall not resist evil. This is contrary to justice; we ought to see that every man obtains according to his merit; we ought to protect society against injustice, and, therefore, make the laws clear, and uphold and make simple their administration. To me, who long to see life, and to understand the struggle of the developing human mind, no morality is so loathsome as that inculcated by such books as ‘The Imitation of Christ,’ which would have a man attend only to the saving of his own soul and keep his mind and hands clean from all contact with knowledge and with help of his fellows. Without knowledge man is a savage, and you will find (if you inquire) that the savage is not that innocent and picturesque creature that sentimentalists have supposed him to be. Knowledge alone can remove our misfortunes and increase our happiness, showing us in what ways the conditions of the world are affected by the consequences of our actions.”

“I do not believe that knowledge will ever make us happy,” said Christian. “What you say is so prosaic. You do believe,—it is because you believe that you doubt so much. It is difficult to explain what I mean; faith does not consist in a set of doctrines that can be argued about; it is a sense of a higher life; it is not even a set of moral precepts, it is a security for all morality. Have you ‘Wordsworth’s Poems’? Now let me read you one of the sonnets:—

“Weak is the will of Man, his judgment blind;  
Remembrance persecutes, and Hope betrays;  
Heavy is woe;—and joy, for human kind,  
A mournful thing, so transient is the blaze!’  
Thus might *he* paint our lot of mortal days  
Who wants the glorious faculty assigned  
To elevate the more than reasoning Mind,  
And colour life’s dark cloud with orient rays.  
Imagination is that sacred power,  
Imagination, lofty and refined:  
’Tis hers to pluck the amaranthine flower  
Of faith and round the Sufferer’s temples bind  
Wreaths that endure afflictions heaviest shower,  
And do not shrink from Sorrow’s keenest wind.”

“I have faith,” Drayton replied, “in that for which there is enough undeviating evidence. Faith is too often a habit;

it is lazy, it is ignorance and prejudice ; it rests on tradition and authority, which we inherit from ages of savagery, and on the surrounding opinions of thoughtless people ; it is imparted to children before they can understand or question ; it appeals to a distorted and partial view of history ; it relies on numbers but not on majorities, since, for instance, the majority of mankind are not Christians ; it appeals to some martyrs, but not to all, to the martyrs who died wisely for the right cause, but not to those who lived in misery and died in pain for the sake of heresies, of false gods or false religions. If you happen to be a Protestant your faith is mainly supported on certain Hebrew books, which, after much discussion, were declared by certain rabbis to be inspired (other books being rejected), and on certain Greek books which were likewise declared sacred by Roman Catholic councils, also after considerable bother."

"And yet I repeat," said Christian, "that you are not happier than I am."

"When did I say that the aim of morality is to make an individual happy? In the end, virtue is designed to add to men's happiness ; but the individual always suffers for the species. Jesus weeps and is crucified for the sake of the world, you say, and yet Jesus is good. Those who love what others do not care for are likely to be lonely and to have sorrows that others cannot conceive. What is sadder among the tragedies of the mind than when a Don Quixote becomes a Sancho Panza ; when he sees that the dreams and hopes of his life were false and all his efforts absurd? Never, perhaps, have people learnt so much and changed their lives and ideas so much as during the last hundred years, and these changes of opinion have made us sad. But only for a time. Truth, if you happen to differ from your neighbour's, provokes your friend's coldness, your mother's tears, the world's persecution. A saviour is always crucified unless he is very cautious."

"Well," said Smith, "then he is no saviour. Success is the proof of merit. A thing is worth exactly what the world gives for it. A gospel that the world accepts and does not pay the slightest attention to is—rather a failure. Life is a game,—the prizes are worthless, but it is unpleasant to lose. Money and honour and good society and a good cigar are no doubt not worth the price we have to pay for them, but to have no money, no honour, no proper clothes, no respectable companions, is to lose the game, and nobody

really likes that. That's why (if you don't mind my saying so) I do not see that these discussions about faith and so on are really very much use ; it does not help us to get on—to win."

"I agree with you," said Drayton. "For instance, a good war is a war that succeeds, that gains advantages for humanity, certainly not one that leaves a rebellious and ungovernable country. But can there be a *good* war? Might we not as well speak of a good robbery? There are circumstances in which a man ought to rob. For instance, he ought to take away the property of a homicidal lunatic, but we are speaking fairly accurately in calling robbery wrong. War is contrary to all our other rules of accepted morality ; it can have no other justification than could be given for two men who fought together in the street. But one insulted the other, you may say, one defrauded the other, one obstructed the other ; and yet public convenience and desire to improve men's natures forbid that they should fight. In addition to which, war needs less and less courage as armies fight from greater distances with arms that are less dependent on the individual strength, skill, and spirit of the combatants.

"In this game which we play with death it has long been decided that it is to the advantage of humanity that we should all play in partnership, that although every individual must risk his own stakes yet we are grouped into a system which scores to itself all that a player who has lost his own game had ever gained ; the accumulated experience of past players has left us certain rules, called morality,—a certain discipline which gives us all a better chance against our great opponent death. Those who are dull or are made blank by disease die many times while still alive ; hence, as humanity must in the end lose the game, being all wiped out by the destruction of the earth, we are said to win, to gain the maximum score possible to us, when the largest possible number of men are strong, are vigorously alive and happy : the greatest totality of life in self, in offspring, and in fellow-men, this is our best prize. But to attain this end the weak must directly or indirectly be prevented from increasing ; for, as I have said, life is not life until we live in mind and body. Justice, then, gives to every man according to his merits in order that the fittest may survive, grow stronger, and multiply ; it must give to every man an equal sphere of action, an equal opportunity, in

order that the best possible material may be best developed. And lastly, as with so many other animals, men must give of their substance to provide for the wants of their children, else the race would quickly perish or become enfeebled. Rightly understood, this rule of justice, of course, forbids a man to injure his neighbour, even though the neighbour could retaliate, since both thereby would be deprived of power to act, to strive after happiness. Communism, or an equal division of all the products of the labour of society, would deliberately allow the weak and vicious to multiply and probably take from the strong the additional food (mental and physical), which, through their greater exertions are absolutely needed by them.

"Now a man has no right to rob his neighbour, as I have said: his earnings are to be determined by what he has *produced*. Hence it will follow that gambling is immoral; for one man gains solely by another's loss. In an imperfect state, as dulness is also immoral, gambling may be sometimes allowable. But is not life insurance a complex form of gambling? Again, a man who by abstinence and additional exertion has saved, can lend to others who are unable to produce because they have not enough to live on until their harvest is ready to be reaped; they need, meantime, food, tools, houses, or, to speak generally, they need what is termed capital; when they have borrowed this they are ultimately enabled to reap more than they saved—they make a profit. They are therefore naturally willing to repay more than they borrowed, if only they can find someone willing to lend. So far, then, it seems to me that interest and investment of capital are moral; but as the investor is the actual employer he should also have all the responsibilities of an employer, and not merely consider the workman, the labourers, and the actual work, as a mere dividend-producing machine; he is responsible for the whole effects of the work done, just as much as if he were the owner and sole originator of it. If a man might not say that which is not—might not, for instance, misrepresent the prices which he has paid for materials when obtaining a new estimate for the supply of them—might not obtain a salary for work that he does not do, might not gamble even in tea, stocks, and corn, might not defraud his employers by accepting a commission from those anxious to obtain an order or contract:—if these severe applications of the abstruse rules, Thou shalt not steal and



you shall not lie, were enforced business would not be business.

"If every man is to have an equal sphere of action, limited only by the freedom of others, every man must obviously be allowed to enjoy the natural necessities which every life demands. No man can be allowed to breathe and then to poison the air needed by his neighbour. But ultimately no one can exist unless he is allowed to use land. All food grows or moves on land. This was so obvious that, so far as we know, all early societies which reached a stage of settled agriculture held their lands in some communistic manner. In our own country, for instance, it was only the successive aggressions of conquerors that broke down the old system. It is obvious that no one can now establish a claim founded on such primitive ownership; besides, all labour, all the accumulated results of labour, which since that time have been applied to the land, would not belong to him. Who can possibly tell what property anyone possesses which is descended from acts of robbery and violence, committed in ruder ages? Would anyone be satisfied if we attempted to right these prehistoric wrongs? In actual practice it is recognised that all land belongs to the Crown in a sense in which the Crown cannot use other kinds of property: government can always appropriate land for public purposes, although if it wishes for pictures or building materials, it must enter into the public market, and may be defeated. When we consider that landlords are liable to forget that rent is not due to their merits but to advantages of their lands (artificial and natural), and that therefore they are being favoured before they have shown that they can play the game well and to the advantage of all of us, it is well that it should be remembered that the state has a right to make them sell out—or at anyrate that the state has a right to gradually reassume that right.

"England is enslaved by misery, by luxury and dulness, therefore I am in favour of whatever decreases the powers of *inheritance without merit*, and increases the opportunities of *merit without inheritance*; our science, our art and our wisdom, are at the service of the rich and powerful, and I am in favour of whatever brings them, instead of ugliness and dulness, nearer to the multitude. I am old-fashioned enough to have faith in Malthus, but I think all improvements in society should be brought about, not by forbidding anything, but by replacing it with better attractions,

"Pleasure is often the needed cure. People who have other pleasures will less recklessly marry, and will be much less inclined to prostitution. A democratic age ought to make its public places display the beauty and dignity of life. At the same time it is unjust of a *government* to take from A, B, and C, in order to give pictures or libraries to D, E, and F; public libraries, museums, and galleries ought to be paid for by those who wish to have them, not by those who are struggling for bread and who cannot use them."

"I entirely agree with you," said Smith. "The amount of money spent by government on such things, on a Raphael, or an old table, not to mention buildings to put them in, is absurd: look at the rates and taxes we have to pay."

"Whatever governments do is badly done—so might anyone say in his haste. When I was younger, angry with the cold selfishness of some of the richer people who are content to grow richer by investing their money and care nothing for those who increase it (who earn money for them while they sleep), and pitying the blank misery of the overworked, I was a socialist: but, considering how idiotic all parliaments are, how bad all government transactions of business, I began to question whether any government could be capable of directly giving to every man his opportunities and employment, collecting all the products of labour, and giving back to each his fit reward; I cannot see how individual freedom and development and need could be respected in a state that possessed collectively all means of production, all profits and increments of value. The proper function of government is to protect every man's liberty against external aggression and against internal injustice. As men progress, war will, I hope, become less common, and the external protection will not be needed: when laws are plain and easy to understand, and the administration of justice is *free* to all, and quick, and little liable to error, crime will also become much less common, because it will be too dangerous. At present the law is regarded as a wordy ass, expensive and uncertain. When governments extend their duties they are bribable, and they are inefficient. Have you ever read Plato's 'Republic'?"

"No," said Smith.

"There we get a fine picture of an imaginary state in which the state does as much as possible. The governing

classes are to possess no private property: it would only cause them to hate and be hated, to plot and be plotted against, to forget that they govern only for the good of the governed. They are to be the best men in the state, selected because pain and pleasure, anger, fear, and grief could not make them forget right opinions which reason approved. The best women are to be made guardians together with the best men, for though in general men manage everything better than women (it is Plato's Socrates who says so, please remember) and there have been more eminent men than eminent women, yet there is no office, no social business peculiar to women as women, and in many things many women excel many men. (The relative developments of different parts of the brain do appear to be different in the two sexes, but I agree with Plato that women ought not to be artificially withheld from any occupation; give them a chance to show what they can do.)

"Now these governors are to regulate all the marriages in the state. The best men should embrace the best women. 'An ingenious system of lots, I imagine,' says Socrates, 'should be made, that an inferior man may accuse his fortune and not the governors of the manner in which the couples are joined.' But the ideal city must not be allowed to become too large or too small. Plato emphasises this as much as modern thinkers, who tell us that improvements in conditions of life can never be permanent *so long as every increase of wages is followed by an acceleration of the rate of increase of population*. Marriage, therefore, must be a solemn coupling for one occasion. The women and children are to be in common, those born from the seventh to the tenth month after a coupling being all sons and daughters to the brides and bridegrooms of the preceding generation, for special days shall be set apart for all marriages. Thus shall the city be one, rejoicing and sorrowing like a single family. All will have many kind and wise parents. No parent shall know its own child. 'The mothers who are full of milk will be brought to special buildings to give suck . . . but all the care of the children will devolve on public nurses, not on (their own) mothers.' All will be educated properly—that is, according to their abilities. The children of guardians may be thrust down to menial trades, and low-born children may be fully educated and become guardians. Now the passion,

mental and physical, voluntary and unconscious, that we term 'falling in love,' is a selecting of those suited to one another : and success in life is partly determined by health and by talent and general fitness, and it increases the individual's opportunities of obtaining all his desires, including a suitable wife ; hence Plato's ideal sexual selection is already, to a slight extent, in action. What chiefly disturbs it is desire for money. Very little is said about the common people, except that they will do their duty. They are to possess private property, but no one is to be rich or poor. As Aristotle objected, the governed would be utterly separated from the governors. And even if all the rulers were philosophers, could they actually arrange education and marriages perfectly, infallibly perceiving every man's merits and powers?"

"Is there not a somewhat celebrated condemnation of art in 'The Republic'?" said Smith.

"Yes," said Drayton. "It is said there that men test what they learnt as children only with the greatest difficulty ; and that children cannot readily understand the difference between allegory and literal fact ; hence we should try not to teach them what is contrary to reason. Death shall not be spoken of as terrible before them, nor shall they hear of ghosts or hell. But can it be good to listen to imitations of the mad or wicked? Should not the poet speak of such people in simple narrative, not imitating them in dramatic speeches and making us feel like them, ungoverned by reason, passionately weeping and raging and fooling? Can it be considered a serious affair to imitate appearances, not necessarily understanding the real things or their purposes?"

"This is roughly the manner in which Plato discredits art, and I think wrongly. Sensation is raw thought—that is, all your thoughts are formed out of the effects produced in your consciousness by what you have seen, heard, smelt, felt. If you had never had any senses you could never have thought. But the more abstract powers cannot rightly operate unless the more concrete powers—the powers of feeling, emotions and sensations—are also rightly developed. Happiness largely consists in a harmonious development and exercise of the entire mind. Again, the nervous system is interconnected ; what exercises and stimulates one part of it stimulates the whole mind and body. Again, virtue is mainly power of sympathising ; but sympathy depends on imagination. If the tones of a voice reveal nothing to you,

if you see no signs of the past history and struggles in the lines on a face, if what a man says does not tell you more than he knows about himself, how can you be virtuous?"

"But," said Christian, "in your cruel morality what use is it to pity? You were speaking only of the survival of the fittest. Faith alone teaches men to bear their crosses, to be unselfish, to fix their affections not on the treasures of time but on those of eternity." •

"The fittest must prevail, chiefly, thereby, that the weak are discouraged from having children. Man, far more than any other animal, can prevent waste, can help to make men fit. Among the lower animals 'time and chance,' that is, diseases, famine, floods, powerful enemies, are often liable to kill indifferently both strong and weak. Man is more protected against these chances. To some extent inheritance of property and rank, of course, artificially favour certain individuals; but if they are weak, especially if they be weak in mind, by squandering and debauchery, and so on, they tend to leave less power to their descendants, or to have fewer descendants. To heal the sick, to feed the hungry child, to train the undecided in a trade,—such charities may be the truest political economy, preventing men from becoming weak in mind or body, from adding to the numbers of the resourceless and miserable. Charity aims at removing the need for charity; it is better to prosecute an oppressive landlord than to give his tenant money for rent, make him repair the walls that leak, and repay illegal exactions; do not give money to that epileptic husband, but make him go into a hospital away from his wife. In general, it is now usually admitted that 'relief of the poor' cannot be properly administered by state officials or unsympathetic machinery. Of course, this increase of the number of the strong through the action of mercy increases the struggle for existence, so that the pains which man has escaped by civilisation are replaced by others that he has made for himself; but it is always by pain and struggle that Nature (the unknown force) gradually evolves a higher type. The ugliness, over-crowdedness, dulness of so many lives in large cities, the more rapid interchange of ideas by means of modern inventions—these serve to irritate man onwards and to enable him to combine more complex elements into one organic being: they hasten the improvement of the human type.

"We cannot say of what service any one life may be in

this process, or any one deed or thought acting on others, influencing and developing their whole future, and yet if you loved your neighbour as yourself you would feed him before you fed yourself, and as there is not enough food for all of us (so it seems, at least), you would die or be very hungry. You would die, and be of no use to anyone, and he might be weak and also useless. Hence I conclude that we must, as you said, subordinate impulses to ultimate, comparatively eternal ends—even when we feel inclined to be unselfish. As man ascends, his view of the world becomes wider, and yet at the same time more united—the isolated trees and leaves and hills become forests and chains of mountains, grouped into definite forms, related to one another, parts of one whole. But never is our horizon higher than we are—the mystery, the unknown, remains beyond. Evolution leads not only from simpler to more complex, but from immoral to moral. We find it so in history; the savage is more immoral than we are. It must be remembered that an Isaiah or Jesus was a genius—their ideas do not reflect the actual level of their times.”

“All your arguments are vitiated,” said Christian, “by your inability to conceive sin.”

“I do not conceive it. All your actions, thoughts, impulses have what we term a cause. Every effect, we say, has a cause; in other words, there is an order in the universe, there are no incoherent parts; it follows from the first cause that everything must be as it is. The more we learn of the world the more clear does this become. We understand that under the right conditions oxygen and hydrogen always form water. We do not understand very well what conditions affect the weather; but we may expect that as we study the complex facts connected with it we may discover what we call a law concerning it—a method, an order, a uniform and inevitable connection between one thing and another. Our knowledge leads us an ever-increasing conviction that the ‘cognisable universe’ is essentially one, interconnected. We infer people’s future actions from their past actions, from their character—that is, from the inherited structure of their nervous systems, modified by their circumstances and actions. We collect statistics as to people’s incomes, the results of harvests, the number of suicides in given periods, the number of marriages, births, and deaths, the ages at which people die, and innumerable other social facts, and then we find that one fact varies in

proportion to variations in another, that there is steady, orderly progress in the variations of each, and not an irregular free succession, that we can trace out laws, formulæ, curves. Hence I conclude that prayer is irrational. But the illusion of freedom of choice is unavoidable in any man's mind ; although in reality he cannot do other than he does, yet he cannot avoid the illusion that he is choosing to do what he does. The question, then, has little practical importance. Free or not free, we must still appear to choose our thoughts and actions ; we must punish and restrain evil, lest it overcome right ; we must praise or blame, to encourage or deter."

"But man is free," said Christian, "he was free to sin or not to sin ; and sinning, he merited punishment."

"If Adam was in a state of equilibrium, if he was so made that he had no *structural* tendency, leading him to incline more towards eating that fruit or not eating it, *then* some *external* force must have disturbed that equilibrium. There is, so far as we know, no effect without a cause. There are several possible solutions to the ordinary inquirer who accepts some conception of a god and who seems to perceive evil in the universe. Perhaps there is no evil : sins, toothache, malice, cancer, are all parts of perfection ; our towns, paralysis, madness, are all the perfect manifestations of the All-Good, All-Powerful. This is the pantheistic solution : God is everywhere, all is God, God is in all. But why should God vary, making himself less God in one place than in another ? And why, if God can do everything, does the made evil even *seem* to our imperfect senses to exist ? Why not make not only no evil but *no semblance* of evil ?

"Or Almighty God might have amused himself with a contest with the devil. He knows he must win, but it passes the time—the long, long time of eternity. He tests us, though he knows what his judgment will be ; he makes us sin, punishes, and pardons us. If Adam's knowledge and judgment were sufficient to enable him to decide, and his whole machinery sufficiently perfect to enable him to act rightly with regard to that apple (for, after all, knowledge and judgment are purely parts of subjective phenomena), then he must have acted rightly ; if he was not sufficiently perfect someone else was responsible for that imperfection ; if, again, the devil is an independent, self-contained being, someone made him, and is responsible for his imperfections. In short, if God caused us to sin, he is

to blame,—it was his amusement. If God did not cause us to sin, and did not at all produce the causes that led to our sinning, someone else caused us to sin, and God is not God.

“This is the third supposition. The devil is not properly under God’s control. God could not help it; there has been an accident, a mistake.

“The harmony of the universe, the uniform regularity, the ‘co-ordination of things under a general plan,’ to which I have before referred, forbids me to accept this view. Man may suffer, but the eternal laws neither change nor waver. There is no sign of conflict in the harmonious system. It is one. We are enabled to consciously aid in that orderly progress towards perfection which we observe. May none of us oppose or hinder it—seem to oppose or hinder—may we be cruel, only to be kind, and selfish, only to add to happiness. We cannot say why change or motion is a universal manifestation, but to us there seems to be a constant progress towards greater perfection.”

“You have managed to slide out of the difficulty,” said Smith. “Is your first cause kind or not? Why is the way of the world cruel? Why do the righteous stagger beneath the cross, bleeding and wretched, while the wicked triumph on horseback, smoking the best cigars? Whose fault is it? We ask the question eternally, till our mouths are silenced with dust—but is that a proper answer?”<sup>1</sup>

“What did we say virtue was? We defined it in terms of happiness and life. What are happiness and life? We have to define them by speaking of nervous systems and of relations between one part of an organism and another. If God has no nervous system he cannot be either good or bad. Morality regulates the action of men or of creatures like men. Of the first cause we can say nothing—except that it is unknown. It is absurd to say God is love if God created everything—all creation ‘red in tooth and claw’; the whole life of some parasites is a torture to the animal that they live in. There is a harmony in the universe owing to the operation everywhere of one law, but it is not a harmony which suits man, a justice such as a man-like being might have made.

“If all men were virtuous all would be happier. Mean-time, virtue gives some happiness somewhere, else it is not

<sup>1</sup> Were it not that Smith does not like poetry, I should have thought that he had been reading Heine’s “Letzte Gedichte.”



virtue. Happiness is the reward for health, strength, size, fitness, virtue, for a good liver and a good conscience; but as man is evolved he becomes capable of feeling more pain and more pleasure, he becomes more alive, so that man feels more than a snail, and a civilised man more than a savage: thus is he driven forward: but being more sensitive and more powerful, the more civilised communities are likely to better avoid pain. Our feelings will become yet stronger when we can further avoid being hurt: foul, ill-smelling houses, wives soured by privation, husbands brutalised by drink, insufficient fires,—while we see signs of such sufferings we dare not learn to feel pity."

"There is one of your opinions that I did not quite understand," said Smith: "I mean your idea of government and politics."

"I should restrict government to the free administration of justice, protection against internal wrong-doers and external foes (so long as war continues). Party government is government by lying, intrigue, and corruption. Do all the members of a party really approve of all the Bills that they have to vote for? How is it that lawyers and solicitors assume that any individual may be dishonest, and that wills, settlements, and leases are drawn up on that understanding, and yet that municipalities, councils, large companies, are all assumed to be perfectly honest until they are found out and someone is ruined?"

"My objection to the whole of your remarks is that they are so cold, so unpoetical, so spiritless. What comfort can you offer to those who feel that life has become heavy and who are yet unable to accept that suicide that you so cheerfully, so freely, allow them?" Christian inquired.

"Are my opinions so much more cruel than those of theologians who offer eternal punishment beyond the grave to 'guilt unrepented, pardon unimplored'?"

"Those who have work to do and little energy, parents or friends to help, and yet no desire to live and work, may be helped by stoicism. If a man has a bad headache, even, he will find that no determination to forget it will enable him to do so: the foe is in the citadel. No one would ever become mad if it were not so. But we can determine not to desire what we cannot have and not to dislike what we cannot avoid: by so determining we can actually kill the desire and the dislike: the will can make the thought to some extent and in course of time. This

doctrine destroys all energy; it is anti-social, leading a man to do nothing for the good of others, but it is a consolation suited to a quiet, unsatisfying life that yet has its duties. It is almost always within your own power to be cheerful, calm, without fear or envy. If you lose anything or are injured, let it be so: this is the price of tranquillity. Indeed, true morality is impossible unless life is beautiful: in the slums, as in stucco-covered, dully prosperous, and ugly suburbs, great righteousness is impossible—you can only be a stoic—determine not to suffer. It is immoral to crowd your rooms with cheap, over-decorated disfigurements, luxurious inconveniences and magnificent monstrosities. It may not seem very wicked of a woman to paint her face, but she is not likely to view life nobly if she does so—and, if she glitters with diamonds, someone is starving.”

“Your morality is interesting, but rather immoral,” said Christian.

“But probably morality rises to its highest level when it ceases to be felt. When the player is so intent on the game that he forgets everything involved; when he quite automatically and without effort runs as fast as he can, plays as well as he can, and does not remember how or why he is playing. ‘A good act or act of duty is rightly done only if done in satisfaction of immediate feeling,’ not with a view to ultimate results in this world or the next: just as a healthy man feeling hungry eats and does not think about the advantages of repairing wasted tissues. Do not the prophets talk about putting the law into our hearts? This is the morality of the engineer who forgets all the noises around him of whirling wheels and gurgling belts, intent only on the puzzling task which he must accomplish; it is the morality of the lover who sees an opportunity of serving his mistress; it is the morality of enthusiasts and of great men.

“But suppose that life is a misfortune, that unhappiness outweighs happiness. It is useless to argue about the matter; a man may know that he is unhealthy, that he has wasted his life, sinned, injured, and caused others to injure; that he is a fool or dyspeptic, and that these are the reasons why life seems so weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable: but, if it seems so to him, then to him it is so. Then let him hate his neighbour as he hates himself; pleasure is the seducer of virtue, the food of life, the parent of

egoism that drinks its neighbour's blood and lives by his death—let him then hate pleasure also. 'Sorrow is better than laughter': laughter moves a man to live, to dissipation, to wanton folly; better is the day of a man's death than the day of his birth. The only triumph over life in life is then the cold, abstract study of life—of the whole vain, pitiable, laughable tragic comedy. He will show men their errors, pity their misfortunes, hate their enemies; but he will not love with them, hope with them, laugh with them. Painless inactivity is then the highest pleasure,—emancipate men's minds, purge them from error and vain efforts, and so help them to attain it—there is no better future happiness for the species: repose and contemplation by destroying a man's will and activity are the greatest pleasures, destroying the individual life, absorbing it in what it contemplates. All other pleasures are perpetual efforts, with them it is always 'to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow.'

"This is the consolation of those from whom life was taken and death not bestowed; living corpses, to whom the scent of flowers is unbearable, recalling so many joys belonging to those who belong to the world of the living; sensitive geniuses, often with a certain inability for ordinary affairs, brains joined to decaying flesh, surrounded by people who weary and torment them; they point to the gasping, bony, omnibus horse and ask if its ancestors ate forbidden oats or whether God tests the character of the mouse when he makes the cat play with it before killing it.

"Will you have some more claret or some whiskey? Or would you like some brandy?"

"No, thank you," both replied.

Drayton poured out some claret for himself.

"After all, this morality of death is singularly unsuited to most people; we will live, we wish for happiness. Nor is it true that it is of no use to argue as to whether life be worth living. For our will can and does influence our thoughts and feelings. We wish for life and happiness, and let moralists and poets show us the best happiness; let them praise joy and love, dignity and beauty. The base dexterity of jugglers, songs of hinted indecency, disgusting contortionists, the hope of seeing acrobats kill themselves, performing animals trained by abominable cruelty—these are at present the most popular amusements. Nor can it be expected (if it is to be wished) that many people will

read as an amusement, because they have not enough quietness.

"Indeed, the more I think, the more I am convinced that to reform any one evil, you must reform the whole of society: that is why the increasing of the general intelligence is the only important task, the only reform which helps. A somewhat gloomy conclusion in a slow-going world, where reason can do so little against prejudice, but it is not for ourselves that we live but for the more than men that shall be. I wonder whether Princess Posterity, whose wisdom and love will be so much greater than ours, will ever pity us, thinking of what we have suffered for her sake—suffered in mind and body.

"I myself have always tried in my books to show people's physical condition as well as their thoughts and actions; hunger and tiredness are causes of thoughts and actions, consciously or unconsciously, just as much as love or hatred; nothing looks exactly the same after dinner as it did before."

"I am sure that we have all derived much pleasure from your books," said Smith ceremoniously.

(Christian said nothing; he thought Drayton's books intolerably dull. So did Smith.)

"And it is not often," Smith continued, "that we can enjoy so much conversation and discussion of matters of so much interest."

"I am afraid you have hardly been able to speak because I talked so much myself," said Drayton.

"I assure you I have enjoyed myself immensely. But it is getting late; my wife will scold me."

"It has been most interesting," said Christian, "but I must really go home now."

With salutations they parted.

Drayton went up to his bedroom.

How much I have been talking, he said to himself in his thoughts. It is easy to talk about right conduct. The young man about to choose a profession, how hard is his problem. Given certain tendencies in his character, certain limitations in his circumstances, what should he do? Man is not content to be, he would be individual. And he must commonly earn his living by petty, vexing, mechanical, uninteresting work—like most other people. He wishes to be more than he can be; to see, hear, feel, think, as though each moment were his last moment. Shall

he, must he, become like these tedious, ordinary fools: "It is a fine day; very nice mutton; anything in to-day's paper?"—is this to be his conversation, the flower of his mind? Such is the success that I have been praising; such are "the fit" who pre-eminently survive. The whole country is flooded with stupidity, and degraded with the service of power and money. The treacherous and honourless war of commerce occupies the more intelligent, and perverts the wisdom and power of those who might do better. The only cure is to show men, from birth onwards, that force and success are not admirable, but that thought, rightly applied, makes one man greater than another. The dumb and battered multitude, to whom we owe all our culture and all our comfort—to the very granite which proclaims where our coffins lie, while the poor are covered by a grassy mound—should have power to speak.

But it is my bed-time, he thought, and accordingly proceeded to travel towards that land of sleep, which is twin-brother to death. Hamlet's *only* fear of death was that *there* also there might be dreams: other people fear it even if it is only death, cessation of their personality. For myself, if I might, I would not live again after this life is done. And, considered according to human ideas of justice (and how else can we consider the matter), would it be possible to rectify afterwards what has been done wrongly here; to compensate even a little wrong with a great quantity of happiness; or, having given too much happiness, to afterwards redress it with much punishment? What is the sense of making us hunger on earth in order to be filled in heaven, or to be full on earth in order to hunger in hell?<sup>1</sup> Why must Lazarus lie full of sores and tormented with hunger, longing for the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table, in order to be comforted afterwards? Why do you call this seemingly absurd arrangement divine justice?

#### NOTE ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

I am aware that the above dialogue is absurdly like a master talking to pupils. The two minor characters never hint at any of those objections which so many readers would at once have made to Drayton's remarks.

In speaking of morality I should perhaps add the following:—Many people, I find, suppose the ten commandments to be the chief divine

<sup>1</sup> St Luke vi. 21, 25.

source of right conduct. Early Christians differed as to whether a man who believed in Jesus, but also held it necessary for salvation to observe the whole law (the so-called "law of Moses"), was himself damned or not. But in no case is there any authority for separating the ten commandments from the other Old Testament commandments. The children of Israel said to Moses: "Speak with us and we will hear, but let not God speak with us lest we die." They said this being frightened at the thunderings and lightnings and the voice of the trumpet and the fire that accompanied God on to Sinai, and God (it appears) did not again appear to them so directly, because they were frightened. But it is nowhere said that these ten commandments are more important than the others. Among the sins to be punished by death are—not fasting on the day of atonement and working on the Sabbath. The second commandment says: "You shall make no image—or likeness." Is this observed? Another says: "The *seventh* day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; on it you shall do no work, neither you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your man-servant nor your maid-servant, nor *your cattle*, nor your stranger that is in your gates: because the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in it in six days and *rested on the seventh day*: therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath and *hallowed it*." Is this Saturday observed?—for God only made holy *the day on which He rested*, which is the seventh day.

When God had rewritten the ten commandments on the second tables of stone he repeated some of the commandments, and mingled others with them,—commandments to keep the passover, the feast of weeks and other festivals, to sacrifice all first-born animals (except such as should be "redeemed") not to sacrifice blood or "to seethe a kid in its mother's milk."<sup>1</sup> (See Exodus xxxiv.).

## VI

"The history of civilisation is one continuous story of development . . . The past is only the present in a less developed form."

C. K. ADAMS, LL.D.

"And he now expected some comfortable vision, but the devil appeared to him. But the devil was more kind to him than God had been."

OLD ROMANCE.

"It is evident that a nation perfectly ignorant of physical laws will refer to supernatural causes all the phenomena by which it is surrounded."

H. T. BUCKLE.

I MUST ask you to excuse me if in the following remarks on the history of Christianity I seem to be rambling into the history of everything. I trust in the end to manifest my purpose.

<sup>1</sup> Ethics is so largely changed by the spirit and style in which it is presented that I must be held responsible for the preceding dialogue. But most of the arguments used by Drayton will be found in Herbert Spencer's "Principles of Ethics." I have also used Courtney's "Constructive Ethics," Leslie Stephens' "Science of Ethics," and Lecky's "History of the Rise of Rationalism in Europe" (on witches).

Nothing would be more likely to prejudice me in favour of religion than the history of the religious: nothing is more in favour of Jesus than the fruits of his teaching, the history of the churches of his followers: when I consider the burnt-offerings that have been sacrificed by his priests, such offerings as Jews, Moors, heretics, reformers, and Catholics—the flaming, blackening, shrieking, writhing forms that in the flames of death protested their innocence or their conviction in the truth that was not truth to their judges; when I read of the civil wars that have desolated lands and caused grass and wild beasts to reconquer cities, because men could not agree about matters that no one can understand; when I hear of holy priests and monks and popes whose saintly lives were disfigured by unmentionable crimes; when my mind detests such blood-stained records, then, O holy and blessed religion, I feel certain that in you is life, peace, and happiness for humanity.

It is useless to say that it was the cruelty of former ages that led to such deplorable results and not their greater faith; the Spaniards at first protested against the introduction by priests of the Inquisition with its secret inquiries, its curious methods of investigating the crime of heresy, and its “acts of faith” or burnings; the English asked the Pope “with visible repugnance” what should be done if no one could be found to torture the Templars, when that Order was accused before the period of its dissolution; it is always the Church, the Pope, the clergy who oppose changes in the manner of worshipping God, because God likes the good old savage ways; or was it the cruelty of the age of Milton that made men burn their old women as witches, the general barbarity of the age of Shakespeare that made us hang and quarter Catholics? Was it not the teachings of religion, the precepts of piety? The Inquisition was never established in England, because the *secular* authorities would not assist and carry out its punishments.

The most worthy influence which has been exerted throughout history by Christianity—for I must here confine myself almost entirely to that one religion—must be already known to you, but my following most brief and weak representation of the excellences which it has so manifestly displayed may serve to recall to you its noble record and refute all doubts concerning its holy benevolence.

At the time of Jesus, to oppose Rome was, to many Jews,

to serve God. Caligula had said in mad vanity: "Bow to my statue, or die"; and Pontius Pilate had endeavoured in vain to exact homage for the imperial emblems: the census and the income-tax, necessitating so much hitherto unknown investigation of private affairs, were supposed to be preparations for slavery; the high priests were mere vassals of Rome, and the nobles were corrupt, caring only for their own pleasures; the Idumean rulers were men of the most vicious character; and murder, rebellion, and massacre were the commonest events of the period. Men were half frenzied. God was indeed very angry with them; evil triumphed over them. But he had sworn never to entirely forsake them; he would send a redeemer to give peace to his land and to his people.

Men were half frenzied, and saw what they expected to see. Several messiahs arose.

According to the opinion of many Jews, the messiah was to be a king who would lead Israel together from the four corners of the earth, into which it had become scattered, would comfort all the troubles of the Jews, defeat their enemies, and establish peace throughout the whole earth; God would reign over all the nations, and the temple at Jerusalem be a house of prayer for all peoples.

But, according to the Essenes, a sect whom I have already mentioned, this earth was utterly corrupt and doomed to a speedy destruction; the messiah could only oppose mammon, and lead men to the cold joys of renunciation and of repose from all earthly endeavours.

Now we know not how Jesus appeared to those who saw him; we know only how he appeared to those who heard about him a century or so after his death.

To the first *Jewish* Christians he was a prophet who had mainly emphasised the necessity of sharing property one with another, and of repentance; the spirit of God had rested on him as on all prophets and he was the son of God as *all men* are sons of God; the unchanging God never changes his laws, and Jesus himself had worn fringes, had been circumcised, had told a leper, when cleansed, to sacrifice according to the law, and had observed the passover and the Sabbath, although he had wished to change the interpretation of the laws concerning this last institution. The neglected, untaught peasants and idle, adventurer Greeks were chiefly attracted by this primitive



teaching: the new sectaries were called Nazarenes, or Ebionites, which means "the poor."

Other converts, expecting the speedy destruction of the utterly evil world by fire, withdrew from its affairs as much as possible, avoiding marriage and living ascetically. In the apocryphal "Gospel according to the Egyptians" Jesus says: "Mankind are to suffer death as long as women bring forth."

Horror and despair haunted Gentiles as well as Jews. The emperors of Rome now had absolute power, the forms of a commonwealth alone remaining; men of dangerous virtue were executed and the senate dared not be independent; the guards killed the emperors and sold the vacant throne or helped one of their commanders to seize it; the luxury of the capital was the misery of the provinces; barbarians had entered the empire and defeated its troops and received money to go away; a nation of slaves laboured for the citizens; and the most refined of the pleasures of many of the emperors and aristocrats was to see wild beasts killed and wounded in the circuses.

In Rome, then, as in Palestine, men were half frenzied. Their gods had forsaken them, or else (so philosophers said) they were not gods. Foreign gods and ancient magic were introduced. The emperors forbade witchcraft and sorcery lest charms should be used against them. A certain number of Roman citizens became Jews, or at least "proselytes of the gate," not bound by the laws of Moses but only by those given to Noah. Others, it is said, added Yahweh to the other gods.

But the Jews did not wish to convert the heathen. Their God was the only "jealous" god. The Romans recognised that each nation ought to propitiate the gods of their fathers, the divine protectors of their land. But the God of the Jews was so rude to the gods of other people. "The polite Augustus condescended to give orders that sacrifices should be offered for his prosperity in the temple of Jerusalem, whilst the meanest of the posterity of Abraham, who should have paid the same homage to the Jupiter of the Capital, would have been an object of abhorrence to himself and to his brethren."

The Jews spread all over the Roman empire, and the Christians with them. The Ebionites, who kept the law of Moses, gradually became separated from the *Gentile* Christians. The Gentile Christians appealed particularly

to the needs of people in the anguish of remorse and despair, who could see no way towards a happy life in a world of infinite corruption. They actually taught that all men were, and always are, utterly corrupt, and that a special sacrifice is necessary to redeem them from the anger of God. The idea of sin, of religious repentance, hardly existed in the Roman religion. The gods were rulers and powers: they were not more moral than men who are moved by unforeseen love or anger.

The Christians differed greatly among themselves. It appears that some to whom St Paul had preached were noted for their licentious lives, supposing themselves destined for heaven whatever they did on earth through the merit of Christ. On the other hand, in Rome they were chiefly regarded as absurd misanthropes. They considered music, art, shaving, false hair, white bread, and warm baths as sinful; whilst circuses, theatres, public sacrifices, and feasts (where gods were invoked over libations) were connected with pagan worship of demons. In the days of Irenæus (the end of the second century) they could restore the dead to life, expel demons, and, after fasting, vigils, and prayers, become inspired by the holy spirit. (Indeed, from the time of Jesus—if not from the time of Moses—through a long succession of fathers, bishops, popes, saints, martyrs, relics, and holy wells, the miracles of Christianity extend down to our own day; and the evidence supporting some of the later miracles must be admitted to be far greater than that which we possess for the earliest.) In many secluded and despised societies a beautiful charity and affection often bound one Christian to another.

Their ceremonies were solemnised in secret, and they were supposed to sacrifice human babies. In later ages (and occasionally at the present day) the Christians absurdly charged the Jews with this same offence.<sup>1</sup> They were regarded as apostates from various religions, and dangerous to the state, because they tried to make others offend their national deities, the gods of whom they were born subjects. They endeavoured to separate themselves from the Jews, especially after the latter had rebelled, and under Bar-Kochba had, for a time, successfully defied Rome. Bar-Kochba had regarded the Christians as spies, blasphemers, and unpatriotic friends to Rome: he scourged

<sup>1</sup> See note at end of this section.

them, and later Christian historians state (probably wrongly) that he killed many of them. When Hadrian punished the Jews with abominable severity the Christians naturally made themselves as un-Jewish as possible. The Romans were inclined to suppose the Christians to be political conspirators. As atheists, worshippers of no known god according to no ancient methods, they were considered as the causes of all unexpected disasters—floods, droughts, bad harvests, and earthquakes; just as the atheists of to-day provoke God to similar indiscriminating acts of aggression. Martyrdom was the surest way to heaven. God paid men with heaven if they suffered on earth; but, if they would not suffer to please him, he *made* them suffer in hell. Bishops had to command Christians not to destroy public idols or otherwise provoke martyrdom. Mutilations, iron hooks, burning alive, wild beasts—these were the terrible punishments which from time to time were inflicted on them by the more savage emperors. The chronicles written in the fourth and fifth centuries, telling much of miraculous interpositions and of extraordinary tortures, are not “historically accurate.” On one occasion Nero nailed some on crosses; others were sewn up in the skins of wild beasts and exposed to the fury of dogs; others again, smeared over with combustible materials, were used as torches to illuminate the darkness of the night. Tacitus relates this, but he must have been a baby when it occurred. It must be remembered, however, that they obtained intervals of peace: Nero’s insane persecution was the worst which they suffered.

The Christianity of the Christians did not enable them to forgive their enemies. “How shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs and fancied gods groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness; so many magistrates, who persecuted the name of the Lord, liquefying in fiercer fires than they ever kindled against the Christians; so many sage philosophers blushing in red-hot flames with their deluded scholars; so many celebrated poets trembling before the tribunal, not of Minos, but of Christ”—so says Tertullian (*de Spectaculis*, c. 30).

At this period the internal history of the Church is a tale of early discussions concerning God and evil, and the right date on which to celebrate Easter, and other interesting matters. Cerinthus declares that the god of the Jews is

not the supreme god; there are many gods, separated from one another by æons. The æon Christ had revealed the highest god. So, too, the Basilides supposed that God only created "powers," and each power created the power below it: God is pure spirit, each succeeding lower power is more material and evil. This dualistic conception—an opposition between the good spirit and evil matter—has not only given rise to many heresies, but being really a natural consequence of the general orthodox history of man's redemption from the evils of the world and Satan by means of the spiritual Jesus, has exerted an evil influence over many people, leading them to asceticism or, at anyrate, to suppose that when the body suffers the soul is improved, or that it is wrong and dangerous to feel happy—the material body being evil, while the spirit is good.

The Emperor Constantine, a very successful military commander who founded Constantinople, for some time combined the worship of Apollo with that of Christ. He adopted the cross—the symbol of the religion of love—as his military standard. Unfortunately, "as he advanced in the knowledge of 'truth' he proportionately declined in the practice of virtue"; and in the year in which he convened the Council of Nice he murdered his eldest son. *Converts to Christianity were rewarded; Jews who insulted Christians were burnt.* In Africa a strange quarrel arose between two bishops who both claimed one see; the dispute was carried on with the gentleness and humility which usually distinguish clerical differences of opinion; five successive tribunals appointed by the emperor did not succeed in satisfying the unsuccessful candidate; finally his followers, the Donatists, excommunicated the main body of Christians. "They rebaptised proselytes, and compelled such professed virgins as joined the party to submit to penance and to renew their vows." An unfortunate bishop called Arius now said that God created Jesus. In order to settle the new quarrel that at once arose the first council of bishops was summoned to meet at Nice. "The peculiar weapon of Arius was logic; his mind was incapable of any speculation which rose into a higher region"; those mysteries, which can only be understood by those who are free from the bonds of reason, were mysteries to him. The unfortunate Constantine presided over the council of three hundred bishops and banished the erring Arius to

Illyrium. Later, Constantine forgave Arius, but, not inconveniently for the orthodox party, he died very suddenly when about to be again received into the Church at the command of its imperial master. Gibbon tells us he may have died from poison or by a miracle; others, however, suggest a providential interposition.

The next emperor, Constantius, murdered his uncles and seven of his cousins, and sided with the Arian heretics. The public establishment of the posts was almost ruined by the troops of bishops who gathered together in synods in order to discover what creed they ought to believe. He decreed that witches and sorcerers, who caused tempests and diseases, should be torn with iron hooks, thrown to wild beasts, or burnt. Finding that many Catholic Christians refused to worship with the Arian Christians Constantius had the mouths of unwilling communicants held open with a wooden engine, while the consecrated bread was forced down their throats; the breasts of women who did not understand the teaching of Jesus in the same manner as he did were burnt with red-hot egg-shells or pressed with sharp boards.

The next emperor of any importance was the celebrated Julian—usually termed Julian the Apostate. I find it easy to imagine why he refused to remain a Christian. According to the standard of that age—and we must not judge it as if it were to-day—he behaved with great moderation towards the Christians. He refused to allow them to teach in the schools because he wished to restore the pagan religion; he ordered them to make ample satisfaction for the pagan temples which they had destroyed, without any legal authority, during the last reign. What could be more just than this? Unfortunately, one bishop, who could not pay the full value of a temple “which had been destroyed by his intolerant zeal,” was tortured by a mob in a horrible manner at Arethusa, being anointed with honey, and then suspended naked in a net and exposed to the Syrian sun and the stings of insects. (But the god of the Christians, as we shall see later, was not content with such incomplete sufferings and sacrifices.) Julian ordered the Christians to remove the bodies which they had buried within the precincts of the ancient temple of Daphne at Antioch; the Christians did so, paying great honour to the remains of St Babylas, who had been interred there, and shouting those psalms of David which express most contempt for idols.

That night the temple of Apollo was burnt down ; and Julian "without evidence" supposed that it had not been destroyed by miraculous lightning, but by a frenzied Christian. Several ecclesiastics were probably tortured in the attempt to find the offender ; however, Julian blamed the torturers, and it must be remembered that in those days justice was never very gentle-handed. George, Archbishop of Cappadocia, an Arian who had oppressed with impartial hand heathen and Christian, taxing them unjustly, and who had possessed monopolies in salt, paper, funerals, etc. ; who had pillaged and insulted pagan temples, and had been maintained in power with the help of soldiers and magistrates, was killed by a mob. This St George of Cappadocia deserved to be killed : Julian pardoned the mob though he rebuked the illegal action. The Christian sects in Edessa engaged in riots one against another : Julian punished them by confiscating their property. Was this so obviously unjust ? He also addressed them thus : "I will show myself the true friend of the Galileans. Their admirable law has promised the kingdom of heaven to the poor ; and they will advance with more diligence in the paths of virtue and salvation when they are relieved, by my assistance, from the load of temporal possessions."

The punishments inflicted by the cruel emperors who succeeded on innocent men, women, and children accused of magic would not need to be mentioned here, since their crime was partly a political offence (endangering the emperor's life), were it not necessary to point out that witchcraft, which has been punished in Christian Europe by such severe tortures and so much destruction of life as being a *religious* offence prohibited by the Bible, is really a crime, the conception of which we inherit from the Romans, to whom all unauthorised consultations of unrecognised gods, who were probably not friendly with the Roman gods, all secret rituals, were strictly forbidden. Just as the Romans did not permit you to consult or propitiate a private god or spirit, so did the Christians forbid all resort to private gods, to rebellious devils.

During the succeeding reigns we see unfortunate emperors surrounded by excited clerics, who mingle argument with abuse in their antagonistic efforts to keep the imperial mind on the right side ; we hear of riots caused by discussions as to the nature of the Holy Ghost ; of the torture,

slaying, and banishing of heretics; *of the destruction by zealous monks of ancient and beautiful pagan temples*; of the avarice of the clergy, which had to be checked by a law against gifts bestowed by women on their spiritual advisers; of the luxuries enjoyed by bishops and of battles between their rival partisans; *of lands and public funds and privileges taken from vestals and priests of the retreating religion*. Meantime, one of the most astonishing events in history was making its effects felt on the corrupt Roman empire: the nation of Huns, moving from somewhere near the great wall of China, had settled in Siberia and by the Caspian, bringing with them their cattle, their women, and their children—a nation of barbarians, as ugly as demons—leaving behind them the weakly who could not endure the hardships of a continued journey, they passed over a continent, burning and slaying. Behind them there was desolation and death, and in front of them death and desolation, caused by the struggles of retreating races; wars within and without shook the Roman empire. In the year 380 A.D. the Emperor Theodosius, the conqueror of the Goths, authorised the followers of *his* doctrine to call themselves Catholic Christians. He expelled with soldiers all Arians and heretics from their churches—which, he said, ought not to be called churches if possessed by “extravagant madmen.” Some Christians in Mesopotamia destroyed a synagogue and a Valentinian (heretical Christian) place of worship. *Fines, confiscation, and death—these are the punishments which he enacted for the still retreating religion*. Woe to the vanquished! was the battle-cry of Christ’s followers. One of the most primitive forms of religion—the worship of ghosts of dead chiefs—had gradually been added to the mythology of the Christians: the martyrs of the faith, often “salted and pickled” (as Eunapius tells us), the saints and prophets, were enshrined in gold and gems on earth, and formed a powerful court in heaven round the throne of the Most High; the personal property of departed saints, imbued with holy power by contact with the holy men, performed miraculous deeds; “sympathetic magic” was so employed that by keeping an image of your eye in a church or holy place it acquired a power which was reflected into your own eye, and this was useful if you had weak sight; and as the pagans were converted by convenience to a religion which they did not believe, it was necessary to decorate it with the sacred forms to which they were

accustomed, such as incense and flowers.<sup>1</sup> After the manner of medicine-men and prophets, many of the clergy retired into deserts (in Egypt or Syria), and under a burning sun, with insufficient food, meditating constantly on a few highly emotional ideas, they soon saw visions and performed miracles. Monasteries arose for those who wished, as nearly as might be, to "sell all" and to "take no thought for to-morrow"; the question was discussed whether clergy might marry, and in monasteries silence and celibacy were commonly commanded. Monastic saints burnt letters coming from their homes and shut their eyes on visiting their sisters. Holy obedience demanded that a monk should go two miles to fetch water and pour it over a dry stick twice a day for a year if his superior told him to do so, the blessed abbot in this way piously inculcating Christian virtues. Some monks are stated to have gone mad. Some in Mesopotamia grazed like the cattle; some savage saints went naked. But, after all, I am human myself, and cannot talk about these degraded creatures.

At this time the Roman nobles went about attended by fifty servants: they amused themselves at the public baths by gaming and by intolerably lengthy meals; the poorer classes received free gifts of food and were entertained at the circuses, though the Christian emperors had suppressed wild beast fights, leaving only pantomimes, choruses, licentious farces, and dances.

Suddenly the barbarians appeared, and famine ruled Rome; they were bribed to retire; they returned and retired, and at each successive return the power of Rome was further decayed; famine and pestilence followed them; in sieges women ate their children; wild beasts and forests reconquered cities and fields; but the conquerers made use of the abilities of their Roman captives and learnt from them; they learnt Latin and were converted to Christianity; they must have mingled to some extent with the inhabitants of Scythia, Germany, or Spain and learnt from them a little of the Roman conception of order and government; they brought to Europe the beginning of a feudal system, since they probably conceived the lands that they seized to be the property of their whole force and that every free man

<sup>1</sup> I cannot see that lights are particularly pagan, considering that candlesticks and a "perpetual light" were commanded in the Old Testament for the temple. Incense was also used in the temple, but not in synagogues.



is bound to obey and support the king in war :—in times of peace they had till now recognised few laws. Amid the lurid scenes of their savage warfare we see absurdly thin hermits in barren deserts preaching to the birds and “orthodox” and “heretic” slaying one another; though a St John Chrysostom, like a Hebrew prophet, dares to rebuke the sins of kings. Almost as soon as the barbarians became Christians they persecuted the heretics, who were usually the orthodox (to speak in modern language), because most of the barbarians were at first Arian Christians; Hunneric and others banished and burnt with abominable cruelty. The lives of these savage races, who borrowed many luxuries and the religion of the more civilised Romans whom they had conquered, naturally reflects little credit on Christianity :—*a whole nation was usually baptised when the king chose the new god.* (It is usually supposed that the so-called Athanasian creed was forged by the orthodox during the disputes of this period.)

We read next of a rivalry between bishops, which ends in one of them being killed, and partly eaten and partly burnt by a mob; of chariot races, in which the fortune of the rival charioteers dressed in green or blue excited such feeling in the minds of the spectators that races were followed by massacres and riots; of the cruelties of the Empress Theodora, who had been a prostitute and pantomime performer; of a general decline of learning; crimes of the grossest kind were common among the clergy, as well as the kings and the people, without shame for them being exhibited,<sup>1</sup> and *Christianity seemed to the barbarians to offer a free pardon for all sin. Justinian closed the Athenian (pagan) schools and deprived pagans of all civil privileges.* Some Montanists (heretics) committed suicide by setting fire to a building, being desperate and unwilling to live by hypocrisy. (A.D. 529.)

Justinian commanded the Jews to observe the passover on the same day as Christians observed Easter. Later, the Jews and Persians combined and attacked the eastern Roman empire, in Palestine, and succeeded in placing it under Persian rule. The monks were driven away and the monasteries destroyed; Jews were again able to inhabit the holy city, which had been forbidden to their impious feet, and to worship according to their own ritual, many of the prescriptions of which had been prohibited by the Christian

<sup>1</sup> Gieseler's "Text-book of Church History," 1868 ed., p. 527, vol. i.

Justinian. The Emperor Heraclius ultimately reconquered Palestine, and made a solemn agreement in writing with the Jews. However, the monks assured him that it was his duty to massacre all the Jews in Palestine and to disregard his written word; if it were a sin, they offered to appoint "a special fast-week for him," and so persuaded him to massacre all who could not conceal themselves.

Meantime, with an unusual degree of violence, another clerical quarrel was proceeding; swords, kicks, exile, and strong language were employed in the endeavour to solve the mystery of the nature of Jesus. "Jerusalem was occupied by an army of monks; in the name of the one incarnate nature they pillaged, they burnt, they murdered" (their erring companion-followers of Jesus); "the sepulchre of Christ was defiled with blood; and the gates of the city were guarded in tumultuous rebellion against the troops of the emperor," who had settled, by means of a council, how the infinite can dwell in the finite; "in pursuit of a metaphysical quarrel many thousands were slain," and others were plunged into a life of war.

In most parts of western Europe the barbarian vassals grew more and more powerful, and fought one another because they had no other occupation. They had powers of coining, taxing, making war, and administering justice. Laws were not used much: disputes were settled by appeal to God,—the contending parties lifting red-hot iron or walking on burning ploughshares and expecting the god who so often helps saints to protect the innocent from injury. The methods of clerical controversy did not grow more gentle, and the tyrants still usually died by poison, murder, or assassination. As kings declined in power and nobles grew independent, the clerical dignitaries became more powerful and more ignorant. Popes and bishops defied kings, fought, or instigated wars: priests forgot how to read. They had their own "canon" law, and excommunication became a terrible punishment. Religion often demanded only that the good Christian should go to church, present the oblation for the altar and part of his goods for the priests, live chastely when holy festivals approached, and know the Lord's prayer and the creed. *Charlemagne and others converted heathen in distant parts of Europe with their swords*: Dagobert, one of the Merovingian kings, decreed that Jews should be baptised or killed. A few adventurous missionaries, however, rebuked savage kings and converted idolaters.

With the exception of the Byzantine bishops, who were obscured by the shadow of the throne, the greater ecclesiastics became more and more powerful, and more especially as barbarian chiefs were attracted by the growing power of the Church to the holy life. The lesser clerical dignitaries also grew richer and more powerful with them. Charlemagne asks whether men have forsaken the world when in a monastery they use heaven and hell, God and saints, as words with which to defraud the poor and the ignorant and to divert property from lawful heirs and drive them to robbery; when they suborn perjury in order to gain what they covet and are surrounded by armed men. It is only natural that monks, made passionate and unhappy by solitude and celibacy, should have become either mad fanatics or amused themselves with such excitements as they could obtain,—they were accused of gross immorality (both monks and nuns) and of drunkenness.

Ages of ignorance are ages of wonderful divine aid, filled with miracles. The second Council of Nice ordered that no church should be consecrated unless it possessed relics. The Monastery of Centrelles (near Abbeville), under Abbot Angilbert (who died in 801), obtained a fine collection, including "portions of the blessed Virgin's milk," of her hair, dress, and cloak, of the bread given to his disciples by Jesus, the candle lighted at his birth, the rock on which he sat when he fed five thousand, and part of the wood of the three tabernacles.

In place of the older barbarians, Saracens, Russians, Bulgarians, and Normans often moved into the more settled districts and had to be driven out or bribed to retire. *They were assisted by men who had fled from more settled lands, because they would not be forcibly baptised.* The Mohammedan Saracens established in Spain a kingdom where men were not mutilated or killed on account of their religion; they only made Jews, Magians, Christians pay tribute, worship in a subdued manner, and show certain marks of respect to Mohammedans. The Christians, later, deliberately insulted them and their religion, and so some obtained the martyrdom which they wished for. However, some of the smaller bodies of buccaneering, lawless Saracens waged war in Italy and France in the most savage manner: but in Spain they introduced knowledge and inquiry which were now quite unknown to Christian Europe—for the pomp

of Constantinople was accompanied by both ignorance and brutality.<sup>1</sup> The Paulicians, who desired only to return to a Scriptural simplicity of doctrine, in which, however, they included a Manichæan conception of the dualistic nature of the universe, were punished with sword, flame, and gibbet: generations of persecution led them to revolt against the murderers of their fathers; they retired into inaccessible places and on to rocky mountains, and for a long time waged war with the orthodox followers of the Prince of Peace.

As soon as the barbarous Russians, Bulgarians, or Normans were driven back it was necessary to convert them in order to add to the power of the Church, to the glory of the true religion, and to the safety of their Christian neighbours. The conversion of the Bulgarians was followed by a dull controversy between the Roman and Greek Churches, which had now become almost separated, since each of them desired to add the new converts to the right—the only true—Church. Moved by miracles, *by the example and commands of their kings, and by desire to imitate the customs of more settled countries*, the heathen of Europe were gradually converted to Christianity: “the reign of idolatry was closed by the conversion of Lithuania in the fourteenth century.”

Christianity was one of the means of producing that mingling of different races whereby Europe was, and is, to become more civilised, as the abilities of different races become combined and the descendants of divers nationalities join in one organism, the separate faculties of their ancestors: paganism, which worships local and concrete gods who are not more moral than men, since they are liable to fall unexpectedly into love and hatred, cannot join humanity as much as the conception of perfect and abstract mercy and justice, which imposes one law and wisdom on all men, white and black, yellow and bronze.

Meantime, before the astonished eyes of the student of history the strangest events are taking place in Rome. He reads of a pope whose dead body was disinterred by his successor and tried for the offence of having been uncanonically translated from a lesser see to Rome; the dead Formosus was declared guilty and punished by being stripped of his pontifical robes, having the fingers used in

<sup>1</sup> It does not seem to be true that the Arabs destroyed the library at Alexandria.

benediction cut off, being dragged through the streets, and cast into the river; violence and poison end the lives of other occupants of Peter's throne; one is said to have been a monster of rapacity, lust, and cruelty; he reads of popes and anti-popes and cutting off noses, ears, and eyes from the followers of the false claimants to the keys of St Peter.

Meantime, something like the modern divisions of Europe into countries has grown up: the functions of the different parts of a feudal system are becoming fixed—the duties established of earls, counts, and bishops; the struggle for power between the component parts of that system, between nobles and king, between pope and emperor, between commons and nobles, is commencing; the institutions—whereby a settled government exists, the justices and the parliaments—are being evolved and perfected by painful struggles; cities are arising where men are protected from plunderers; the conception of liberty is being revived.

The wild beast anarchy of those ages was becoming unbearable; the Church was tired of bloodshed, and persuaded men to maintain a "truce of God" or a "peace of God"—periods during which private wars and just revenges should be intermitted. In the castles of lawless, isolated robber nobles, whose lives were maintained by plunder and oppression, the virtues of chivalry were arising, for the lady ruled the castle in her husband's absence and trained her sons and the vassals who lived in her house.

The practice of flagellation became more popular among clerics, and desperate attempts were made to prevent them from trafficking in the honours of the Church, from torturing subordinates in order to gain their money, and from secretly marrying or committing adultery or unnatural crimes.

Now appeared Peter the Hermit, who had been to Jerusalem and received a letter from heaven. To deliver the sepulchre of the Galilean and Jew, Jesus, from the power of the Mohammedans was the noble purpose which he preached to the Pope and people of Christian Europe. Pope Urban II. dreamt of a single Church, which should rule the policy of all the kings of the earth and hold in its hands the happiness of the living and of the dead: he proclaimed remission of sins to all who fought in the crusades, and he declared these wars to be in accordance

with the will of God. On the way to Palestine the monk, the peasant, the criminal, and the outlaw might surely find new pleasures. A holy goose and a herd of goats went in front of the pilgrim soldiers to show them the way. "Sinning freely . . . that grace might abound," the lawless rabble proceeded across Europe. The holy Church taxed the nations to pay the expenses of the war and sent her legates into every land. Meeting with Jews, nearer at hand and more defenceless than Saracens, they declared "the Jews have crucified our Saviour, therefore they must return to him or die." In a church at Rouen they offered to the Jews death by daggers or baptism. At Treves the Jews escaped by asking the bishop to tell them quickly what to believe so that we may be safe. At Speyer they were murdered. At Worms some were murdered, a few baptised, but the greater number committed suicide, women killing their babies. Others were protected by the bishop in his palace, but he afterwards declared that he would no longer shelter them unless they consented to be baptised. They requested a short time for consideration. When they were alone they killed one another; the disappointed mob murdered the few survivors and dragged the corpses into the street. One boy, whose father and seven brothers had been killed, asked to be baptised. When he was at the font he drew out a knife and stabbed the bishop's nephew: he was immediately killed. Nearly eight hundred were killed at Worms.

Next day thirteen hundred were killed at Mayence:—the archbishop divided their property with Count Emmerich, a leader of the crusaders.

Later, the emperor, Henry IV., permitted Jews who had been baptised at this time to return to Judaism.

The earliest crusaders were killed in the east of Europe, before they reached the Holy Land. Those who came after were not greeted with pleasure by the Greeks; they left desolation behind them, plundering houses and churches.

Of the abominable cruelty—more than savage—with which the first crusaders carried on their war, I will say nothing. It was a holy war; and at last, with groans and tears, "in an ecstasy of joy and thankfulness," the disciples of the Lamb of God knelt before the tomb of their Lord.

St Bernard preached the necessity of the second crusade to further extend the territory of the newly-

established Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. He spoke with restless, irrational fervour: "The Christian glories in the death of the pagan," he said, "because by it Christ is glorified; by his own death both he himself and Christ are still more glorified." Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Clugny, wrote to Louis VII., who was about to join the crusaders, saying:

"Of what use is it to go forth to seek the enemies of Christendom in distant lands if the blasphemous Jews, who are much worse than the Saracens, are permitted in our very midst to scoff with impunity at Christ and the Sacrament? . . . Yet I do not require you to put to death these accursed beings, because it is written: 'Do not slay them.' God does not wish to annihilate them, but, like Cain, the fratricide, they must be made to suffer terrible torments, and continue reserved for greater ignominy, and to an existence more bitter than death." As before, "death or baptism" was the usual cry of the crusaders.

After great sufferings the second crusade was able to aid in the siege of Damascus, but, quarrelling among themselves, one party conspired with the enemy and led the rest to attack the city from a barren and defenceless position. The army retreated to Jerusalem and, later, retired ignominiously to Europe.

After a reign marked by "sanctified treachery" towards infidels, many of whom were massacred in a pasturage which had been granted to them by the King of Jerusalem, by gross immorality and by lawless feuds, the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was conquered by Saladin. Corrupted by the temptations of idleness and by rich gifts from the pious, the monasteries were constantly being reformed and again falling away from the strictness of their rules. Tired of the world, new enthusiasts were constantly retiring into barren places, kneeling and kissing the earth until the mind was confused and the lips hard like those of a camel, sleeping on boards in a hollow dug in the earth like a grave, fasting, and wearing iron next to the skin; new monastic orders were constantly arising, of which the monks were forbidden to speak or eat meat or possess property (a present made to one member was to be given by the superior to some other), or allowed to beg for food only after entirely fasting for two days. The orders of monkish knights increased wonderfully fast in numbers and wealth and soon added military roughness

and lawlessness to monastic ignorance and selfishness. "Hence the frequent complaints of the time on the immorality, faithlessness, and pride of these knights," especially the Templars.

*Pomerania at about 1125 A.D. was converted to Christianity by force, by miracles, by preaching, by gifts, and by remission of taxes.* A wicked man who reaped on the festival of the Assumption—and when rebuked said: "Yesterday it was the Lord's day, and to-day we are again told to be idle. What is the meaning of this religion which tells us to cease from necessary work? When are we to get an harvest in?"—fell down dead.

Numerous sects of heretics gradually spread throughout Europe. It is difficult to understand the exact doctrines of many of them: but all competent writers seem to admit that the obvious corruption of the Church, its neglect of the common people—on whom no moral instruction or intellectual nourishment was bestowed, the constant struggles for power between clerics and nobles, and the fantastic scholasticism of the learned writers, were the causes of the movements.

As we shall see later, the nobles became less powerful during the twelfth century. The towns which rose into independent power encouraged a slight revival of learning: they needed laws and lawyers: universities were founded. As, however, the conception of "science"—of observation of the actual phenomena around us—did not yet exist, and as knowledge of languages and literature was greatly restricted (Greek being probably quite unknown in western Europe and Hebrew confined to Jews and a few very exceptional saints), the learning of the period was empty and useless. Spain, being in contact with the Mohammedan Saracens, was a centre of knowledge.

Now in A.D. 1188 the third crusade was preached: everyone in England who would not join had to pay a tenth of all his goods towards the cost of it. £70,000 was raised, "but it is astonishing to learn that a sum almost as large—£60,000—was extorted from the scanty company of Jews settled in England." However, the crusade did not actually begin till Richard I., Cœur-de-Lion, ascended the throne. He sold the earldom of Northumberland to the Bishop of Durham for £1000; he received into favour his brother, the Archbishop of York, for £3000; resigned his powers in Scotland for £10,000; and the



Jews foresaw what would happen them. In London the mob and the crusading rabble killed the Jews, pillaged, and set fire to their houses. At Lynn, Stamford, Norwich, and Bury St Edmunds similar massacres took place. At York the Jews obtained the fortress: for six days the sheriff, the armed bands, and the populace besieged them. A canon-regular read Mass and sprinkled holy water for the assistance of the Christians, telling them to "destroy the enemies of Christ." He was killed by a stone. At length the Jews could resist no longer: they had no food. The rabbi explained the example given by many pious congregations in ancient and modern times. The fortress was set on fire; the leader of the congregation slew his beloved wife, and the rabbi honoured him by killing him next; each slew another with a knife; a few only preferred to await the terms which might be offered to those who surrendered. They offered to be baptised if they might be allowed to live, but the Christians rushed in and slew them. Altogether about 500 perished. The men of York then hastened to the cathedral, seized all bonds and obligations preserved in the archives, and burnt them. These bonds on the death of those who had held them should have escheated to the king; Richard was furious when he heard that they had been burnt, and commissioned the Bishop of Ely to punish the offenders. But the ringleaders escaped to Scotland.

Having raised money the holy warriors set out. Murderers, it was enacted for the sake of discipline, should be tied to their victims and thrown into the sea, and they who drew their swords in anger should lose their hands, while thieves should be tarred and feathered and set ashore. Most of the third crusade never reached Jerusalem. Plundering and insulting, the English contingent involved itself in quarrels with the Portuguese and with the Comnenians in Cyprus. At length they reached Acre, where they defeated the Turks. Truce was made with the Turks; but as the Turks could not fulfil the terms by giving up the relics of the true cross and 200,000 pieces of gold, their hostages (five thousand in number, it is said) were cut down and their bodies hacked open. The champions of the cross recreated themselves "with beastly debauchery and excess": they quarrelled among themselves, and, finally, arranged a truce of three years and eight months with Saladin, and returned to Europe.

Pope Innocent III. preferred that the Holy Roman Emperor should fight in Palestine rather than against the Papal troops, and the emperor preferred war to insurrections, so the fourth crusade was preached, and ended in complete defeat of the crusaders.

In marching across Europe the crusaders, who were Christians of the Western Church, made use of the hospitality of their eastern brethren. These abhorred them on account of differences in rules of discipline, in questions of theology, and in minute ceremonies. The Greek clergy purified the altars after French priests had used them; the western strangers insulted and plundered. In 1183 the Latins were massacred in Constantinople; their quarter was reduced to ashes, clergy being burnt in churches and sick in hospitals; neither age, sex, nor friendship "could save victims of national hatred," of avarice, and religious zeal; four thousand were sold into perpetual slavery to the Turks. Priests and monks helped to slay the schismatics: with loud joy they praised the Lord, tied the head of a murdered Roman cardinal to a dog's tail, and laughed to see it dragged through the city: fugitive western Christians meantime burnt the coast country by which they escaped.

The Pope was not yet satisfied. The crusades enabled him to interfere with every nation, to suspend civil jurisdiction, to levy taxes under the name of alms, to release barons from the allegiance due to their sovereigns and debtors from their creditors, to force kings and chiefs to take vows, to exact fulfilment of these vows at convenient times, and to excommunicate the refractory—and therefore he stirred up a fifth crusade. The fifth crusade first conquered the Christian city of Zara in Hungary for Venice. The claimant to the throne at Constantinople next persuaded them to besiege it for him: he said he would help them against the Turks after they had taken it. However, they quarrelled with him, and the crusaders divided the conquered Greek empire between France and Venice. The Cathedral of St Sophia was desolated, its magnificent and beautiful altar broken and divided as spoil; books and statues and palaces were burnt and broken, the surviving beauties of paganism and of Orientalism destroyed or stolen. For nearly sixty years the Latins ruled in Constantinople, suppressed the Greek ritual, thrust the Greeks out of every high or lucrative office, and left behind them a division between Greek and

Western Christianity which has not been closed to this day. The last of the Latin emperors sold to France the holy crown of thorns, the baby-linen of Jesus, the lance, sponge, and chain of his passion, the rod of Moses, and part of the skull of St John the Baptist. The Greeks gradually freed themselves from their western conquerors.

Meantime, several crusades were proceeding in Europe. The heretics and the Waldenses and Albigenses, were they not becoming more and more spread over Europe? Innocent III. promised absolution to all who helped to kill them: here was a means of salvation, nearer and easier than Turks and Jerusalem. At Beziers Catholics joined with heretics and Jews in defending the town against the holy army: all were killed and the city burnt. "Kill them all," said Abbot Arnold, "the Lord knows which are his."—Four hundred were killed at Carcassone; Viscount Raymont-Roger, their leader, being decoyed by a promise of safe conduct, and then imprisoned. No faith should be kept with one who has been faithless to God. Jews, usurers, and heretics were killed. Of the Jews, Innocent III. was an active opponent: his council decreed that they should hold no office and should wear distinguishing badges. They were gradually forbidden to possess land or houses: they were forced to become money-lenders and then again forbidden to lend money. Sometimes an emperor or king took possession of them, protected them, and robbed them. In France the crusaders were followed by desolation and death; they burnt crops and heretics; they pulled out the eyes of their prisoners and cut off their noses; they hanged, they severed them with swords "with immense joy." "Woe to the vanquished," was the battle-cry of the defenders of Christ's triumphant cause.

At this period the Inquisition was founded.

St Francis and St Dominic founded their orders of begging monks, who were obliged to beg for their food. St Francis of Assisi was a somewhat charming madman, who kissed lepers, who were at that time miserably cast out from all human society, and who went to Morocco in the hope of obtaining the crown of martyrdom. After fasting for forty days, he beheld a seraph with six wings bearing Christ crucified: he was permitted to feel some of the pains of the passion, and the stigmata, or the marks of nails and lance, were imprinted miraculously on his hands, feet, and side. At first the two new orders were useful preachers

to the neglected poor : at the time of the Reformation they were "perhaps the most profoundly corrupted of all the orders."

In the sixth crusade Frederick II., after being twice excommunicated by the Pope, gained Jerusalem more by the pen and treaty than by the sword. Then, later, Louis IX. of France, a good saint but a stupid man, allowed crusades against Jews in his own country and himself lead a crusade against the Turks : he was taken prisoner, and his soldiers were killed, or forcibly converted to Mohammedanism.

By killing the most worthless part of the European population ; by weakening the nobles, who were killed, worn out, or ruined, and so helping to strengthen kings and abolish anarchy and private wars within kingdoms ; by breaking up the feudal system and helping to abolish serfdom through the long absence and the impoverishment of the aristocrats ; by encouraging trade, through the movements of so many men, and through new views of foreign lands and foreign luxuries and conveniences (Gibbon says silk, sugar, and wind-mills were thus introduced to the Latin nations) ; by leading men to wider views of the world and of foreign policy, and so preparing them for the ideas of a balance of power and of the common interests of humanity ; by encouraging voyage and discovery ; by strengthening the Church and the Pope so as to lead them to greater exactions and corruption and decay and to a revelation of their harmfulness — in these ways the crusades were of use to Europe.

We need not now for a little while—my mind revolts against further horrors—try to steadily follow the progress of the Church and of Christianity. We may pass over much—Pope John the Twenty-Third was only accused of piracy, rape, murder, sodomy, and incest—all worse charges against him were withdrawn ; at the same period charges against the licentiousness of the clergy were useless—so many were guilty that only a few could possibly be punished ; lepers and Jews were burnt in their houses because they poisoned the wells with fragments of the Host, mixed with blood, herbs, frogs, spiders, and skins of basilisks ; at the time of the Black Death the same charge was everywhere brought against the Jews, and immense numbers were massacred ; disgraceful, forcible baptisms took place in Portugal, accompanied by the usual suicides ; the Templars

were tortured, till willing to confess anything, even (as one of them said) having been guilty of killing the Saviour ; in one and a half centuries 30,000 sorcerers are said to have been burnt ; at the end of the fifteenth century the licentiousness and unnatural crimes of the clergy, infecting laymen, introduced new and loathsome diseases ; the Jews were expelled from Spain, compelled to suddenly sell all they had for the lowest prices. Many went to Naples : of these "a great many perished of hunger, especially those of tender years," says a contemporary writer. "Mothers with scarcely strength to support themselves carried their famished infants in their arms, and died with them. Many fell victims to the cold, others to intense thirst, while the unaccustomed distresses incident to a sea voyage aggravated their maladies. I will not enlarge on the cruelty and avarice which they frequently experienced from the masters of the ships which transported them from Spain. Some were murdered to gratify their cupidity, others forced to sell their children for the expenses of the passage. They arrived in Genoa in crowds, but were not allowed to stay there long, owing to an ancient law which interdicted the Jewish traveller from a longer residence than three days. . . . One might have taken them for spectres, so emaciated were they . . . ; they only differed from the dead in power of motion, and that they scarcely retained. Many fainted and expired on the mole, which being completely surrounded by the sea, was the only quarter permitted to the wretched emigrants. The infection bred by such a swarm of dead and dying persons was not at first perceived ; but when the winter broke up ulcers began to make their appearance, and the malady, which lurked for a long time in the city, broke out into the plague in the following year." "Woe to the vanquished" was the law of the followers of him who taught "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you."

One hundred Jews also who had been expelled from Portugal and wrecked at Malaga in Spain were there converted by the priests and magistrates, who until they were converted refused to let them have any food : fifty others, however, preferred to starve until at length the Malagese, defying the Church, gave them food (1493) ; at about 1420 the war in Bohemia between heretical Hussites and Catholics was carried on "with an atrocity which has probably *never* been equalled,"—Ziska, the Hussite leader

burning monks and priests in pitch; and the Catholics added to an equal barbarity treachery—from which the heretics were free—promising to spare lives of captives and then killing them; the Borgias, fratricides and murderers, who killed men for the sake of having their wives or their property, and who used the papal throne to assist themselves in stealing and in shamelessly endowing their relatives, made their name a word personifying every vice of cruelty, terror, and licentiousness; King Manoel of Portugal had numbers of babies torn from their Jewish parents and baptised; other Jews he later locked up in an enclosed space without food for three days, then had them dragged by cords, hair, or beard to churches and to baptism,—many, however, killed themselves or their children; others were walled up to the neck with brick walls or racked; *many of the Moors were converted by bribery and punishment, and in 1502 all Moors over fifteen years of age were offered exile or baptism*,—sudden exile of a whole community brought with it, as usual, terrible sufferings,—all these we pass in the records of Christianity—surely there was never a religion like it!

While we have been absorbed by these charming records of the Church secular Europe has been conquered, a new force has slowly wandered over it, a few old books and statues have restored to men's minds the idea of beauty that barbarism and Christianity have so long destroyed. Printing has, of course, been invented. In 1501 Alexander VI. sent forth a bull with special reference to certain German provinces, proclaiming that nothing shall be printed without archiepiscopal licence, and that obnoxious books already produced shall be destroyed. *In Spain Cardinal Ximenes burnt a large number of copies of the Koran and other Mohammedan books*, most of them beautifully bound and illuminated. The attitude of priests towards knowledge is always a little amusing: Galileo was commanded to say seven penitential psalms once a week because he thought that the earth is not the centre of the world, an opinion which not only seems to contradict the Word of God but likely, in the end, to overturn any system of theology in which all created beings on earth are intended chiefly for man's use; among the heretics and magicians many were condemned who had merely acquired unusual knowledge, for when the ecclesiastical investigators questioned suspected persons they tortured them until they usually re-

vealed heresy or dealings with the devil or his subjects or use of charms and illicit ceremonies.

Leo X. would seem to have been one of the best of the early and mediæval popes: he was fond of poetry, painting, and eating—peacock sausages seem to have been invented for his table. He was also fond of Greek, Latin, and hunting; but it has been said that he was not a Christian. But in 1513 there was no peace for a Pope who liked hunting and dining and worldly success better than arguments. In addition to a war in Italy, some German Dominicans were engaged in a quarrel with the learned Reuchlin. It seems that a certain Pfefferkorn, who, having been a Jewish butcher and committed a burglary, had found it convenient to be baptised and born again into a respectable position. He now wrote books against the Jews: he was probably paid for them. He said all copies of the Talmud ought to be burned. Before it could be done the Jews protested, and an archbishop agreed with them. However, Emperor Maximilian appointed commissioners to investigate the matter—among them was Reuchlin. The books had been seized, when the emperor changed his mind and revoked his former order. Just at this time a thief robbed a church. When he was caught he declared that he had sold the holy wafer to the Jews of Brandenburg. For many centuries it had been said that Jews stole the consecrated Host: often they pricked or injured it, and it miraculously bled: many massacres had occurred in consequence of this. Also at this time the Jews killed a child—this also they frequently did as they needed Christian blood—just as in earlier Rome the Christians were known to sacrifice children in their private communions.<sup>1</sup> Twenty-eight Jews were burned in punishment of these awful crimes: two, who had been baptised from fear of death and from love of the excellent religion of him who taught "Love your enemies," were only hanged. In consequence of these events Maximilian ordered the investigation of Hebrew books to be renewed. Reuchlin said he could not understand the Talmud, and therefore thought it should not be burned. The angry Dominicans wrote a furious libel against Reuchlin: Reuchlin replied with just indignation. The Inquisition damned Reuchlin's book and ordered it to be solemnly burned before fathers and brothers and theologians, magnificent in vestments and

<sup>1</sup> See note at end of this section.

clerical finery. Archbishop Uriel interfered, and at the last moment delayed the death of the book. And now poor Leo X., who knew no Hebrew and did not care for theology, was asked to decide: Leo ordered another inquiry. Reuchlin and his book were acquitted. Leo was again appealed to, and appointed a cardinal to rejudge the affair. Reuchlin's book was condemned to be burned. The affair invited the intervention of a humourist—a book appeared called “*Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*”—these obscure men being caricatures of stupid, narrow, ignorant, intolerant, self-satisfied pietists—writers of an earthquake awakening Latin (if the earth likes good Latin). Leo prohibited this book, and so increased the sale of it. The monks were being laughed at: therefore the monks said that all the Jews ought to be expelled from Germany, but Emperor Maximilian, who owned the Jews, objected to this. Kings and emperors worried poor Leo about Reuchlin, and he handed the affair to part of the Lateran Council. The Inquisition and the Dominicans, who feared laughter, asked to have the suit suspended. Leo was sincerely pleased to end the matter.

As we have now reached the period at which it is often supposed that *modern* history begins let us consider what we have seen.

Just as Christianity contains a glorified, spiritualised savagery—ideas that survive from childish days of man's evolution—such ideas as that by eating a god or an animal we inherit the powers and qualities that the god or animal possessed when alive, and that sins or sufferings can be transferred from one person to another, so does the Christian Church always retain the thoughts, customs, and manners of an earlier and more barbarous time. “Do you differ from me?” says the earlier Church. “Yes,” replies the heretic. The Church applies the rack or some other good torture instrument to the puzzling, vexing person. “Do you still differ from me?” says the Church in her childish manner: and with the cruelty of a child burns the heretic if he still perseveres in his irritating opposition. If the world is naughty and you are tired of it, the Church, like a child, would have you sulk and have nothing to do with it: go into a monastery and do not eat your nice dinner, but try to feel unhappy, just as a child does when it is angry or offended. The Church was always less civilised than the state, the Pope had to rebuke kings for not persecuting heretics.



Nor were these acts of cruelty always done in a rage. They are usually the deliberate, written commands of popes and priests.

Of course, I admit that the intolerable despotisms, the innumerable wars, the perpetual smell of death, and the constant restrictions of the Middle Ages made men nervous and unhealthy and savage, but it was religion also that tried to kill or to make the living not alive. Law and religion commanded men not to keep faith with heretics and Jews. Ghettos were established: Jews were shut up in single streets away from all natural life, so that their houses were dirty, ugly, and overcrowded; they were gradually forbidden to exercise any other trade than that of money-lending, in which they were encouraged in order that princes, by robbing them, might grow rich; they were commanded to wear badges; their aspirations were destroyed by monotonous, dull lives, coarse insults, imprisonments, mockery, and fear of burning; the colour of their clothes was regulated by law; all their acts were occasions for fresh extortions.

However, it follows from what I said about the tendency of religions to preserve evils that, in studying the history of a Church, we do not see much of the advance of mankind, we observe men always at their worst moments: my remarks need not then depress you: mankind does advance. A nation rises, becomes civilised, decays; it may seem as though its barbaric conquerors have destroyed all that it had acquired and must themselves live and develop as though it had never been. But as the new barbarians develop their own character, as their powers become educated by means of their struggles and history, they can gradually add to their own peculiar qualities and powers those of the older civilisation without needing to repeat all the efforts by which the older world acquired them. Modern Europe has inherited part of the virtues of Greece and Palestine and added them to European virtues. Just as every child has to begin at childhood, and gradually grow old, and can yet easily learn and understand at an early age what it needed centuries for humanity to originally discover, so, although every fresh nation has to be young and barbaric again, the later nations may easily be taught what the older ones had to teach themselves through ages of pain.

How curiously absurd seem to us those discussions

between Luther and the orthodox, established Church. Luther said that the sin of murdering your parents could not be forgiven by buying for four ducats a piece of paper with certain words and designs on it:—this led to a series of wearisome arguments and to furious excitement; it is a pity he could not see at once that a sin once done can never be undone; it is a cause in a series of causes; its effects are part of the unchangeable harmony of the universe. But, reformed or unreformed, Luther remained religious and a monk. When the oppressed peasantry revolted in Germany and quoted Luther's translations of the Old and New Testaments in support of their claims, showing that the ancient Jews only paid to their priests one tithe, and that the peasant should not be compelled to do more than the accustomed compulsory services, but should be paid for additional work, Luther advised the authorities to "stab, kill, and strangle" them. And yet the main virtue of Luther was his power of seeing the obvious, his peasant-like, every-day, notion that even the Bible or religion must have a meaning, and that absurdities cannot be made right by authority.

Emperors, kings, and popes were too busy to suppress the growing schism; Charles V., Holy Roman Emperor, King of Spain, with possessions in the Netherlands, Italy, the Mediterranean, and America, had many wars to attend to; Francis I. of France, with claims to part of Italy, and for some time a prisoner in Spain, was also fully occupied; and Clement VII., Pope, connoisseur of art and patron of learning, in addition to not feeling much interest in theology, was for a short time a prisoner in St Angelo, and was busied with treaties and diplomatic arrangements, having to manage and to augment the Medici property; the Turks, too, invaded Europe. At diets, councils, and public arguments these puzzled rulers try to divert their vassals and nobles from wasting their energies on the nature of the Lord's Supper, at a time when standing armies are being established, and when, with the help of his subordinates, the head of a state might so much increase his power. In Switzerland Zwingli, with violence, proclaims need of political and religious reformation: the reformers break images and pictures in churches: *Catholics are banished from some states*, and steadfast nuns severely treated: reformers who preach are at other times imprisoned and killed; there is a war, and then a peace by

which it is settled that the majority in each state is to decide the opinions of everyone in it.

Christian II. was ruling in Denmark and Norway and contending for the throne of Sweden. *As he wished to check the power of prelates and nobles in Denmark, he encouraged the Reformation there:* in Sweden, on the other hand, both peasants and nobles opposed his claims to the throne, and he, therefore, led an army against them, conquered them, and swore not to punish those who had fought against him; but, employing an old papal ban against the party of his opponents, he executed a large number of them, the Pope's words being of more value than his own oath: he afterwards again favoured the Protestants. Christian was deposed: *his successor used Protestantism to weaken the nobles and prelates.*

In Sweden Gustavus Vasa obtained the throne after a war. The Church possessed enormous power and two-thirds of the entire land. Wars and changes of government had placed the country in a state of anarchy. Gustavus declared the right of the king to dispose of all Church property, *and introduced Protestantism by force* — the people at one time rebelling against it. They saw in it only a change of forms or a limitation of the power of the priests. However, when, later, kings tried to forcibly restore the Roman Church, popular opinion, before this indifferent, became "decidedly hostile to the papacy" and demanded Lutheranism from the king.

In Italy it was chiefly the cultivated classes who were attracted by Protestantism, but most of them remained outwardly Catholic until the Inquisition was directed towards their extinction: then some were killed and imprisoned, while others went to Switzerland.

In England, before the Reformation, there was greater political liberty than anywhere else in Europe. Henry VIII. liked to have a reputation as a scholar, and wrote a book against Luther. But, growing tired of his wife Catherine, and wishing for Anne Boleyn, he grew religious, and thought he had long been transgressing a law in Leviticus against marrying a deceased brother's widow. The English had for a very long time opposed ecclesiastical extortions and papal interference. Henry reformed nothing, but transferred the authority of the Pope to himself. The Church property was sold and squandered by the

king; Protestant heretics were beheaded or burnt, and Catholic traitors were hanged.

Charles V. was still busy with wars against France and Turkey; he had no time to prevent Protestantism from spreading in Germany; *the rulers of some German states were moved by the convenience of repressing the clerical powers* and others by inclination to follow their subjects. Some ecclesiastical states became temporal, *greatly to the advantage of their rulers*. However, Charles was able to show his piety by expelling the Jews from Naples (1540); while his brother expelled them from Bohemia (1542). Many Jews went to Turkey, a tolerant and Mohammedan country. Luther was in agreement with the Catholic Church about the Jews: he recommended that their synagogues should be burnt, that they should be deprived of their property and expelled, although he himself at the beginning of his career had advised that they should be treated kindly.

His opinion had, perhaps, changed on account of the number of Unitarians who had appeared after the translation of the Bible. Some of these were killed or exiled in Switzerland. They differed greatly in opinion, most of them admitting Jesus and the Holy Ghost into their mythology, but in more or less subordinate positions. Other reforming sects, supposing the New Testament to have been meant seriously, tried to follow Jesus' teaching: for example, the Doopsgezinden, followers of Menno Simons, rejected the oath and all use of force, and thought death ought to be a gain to a Christian and riches dirt; pleasure, honour, and life should be pain, shame, and death to him; he should willingly suffer wrong, and neither go to war nor carry weapons; he should not ask for what had been taken from him, he should give and lend to all who begged and demanded; he should have no servant or rule, nothing of his own, nothing worldly, neither feasting nor trading nor marrying nor dancing. They were for some time severely persecuted, being supposed to be like the Anabaptists, a sect who had for a time combined gospel poverty (or communism) with warlike defiance of all government and with sexual immorality, and most of whom had been killed with great cruelty in Germany.

Charles V., having finished his foreign wars, subdued the Protestant princes in the Schmalkald War in order to gain complete mastery over his own realm. The common-sensible and unscrupulous monarch then devised a con-

fession of faith, the Interim of Augsburg, which was neither Catholic nor Protestant, and which he commanded everyone to believe. To enforce it he was obliged to execute and exile clergymen and to send people to Mass guarded by soldiers; and then it could not be enforced, nor could the emperor keep on good terms with the ambitious Pope.

But mediæval despotism which subjected the entire feudal system to the king was doomed. The Germans rebelled against the emperor, his religion, and his foreign soldiers; and they defeated him, and obtained the right of each government to settle its own religion: *the ruler's religion was in each case to be the people's religion.*

In 1541 Calvin formed his curious ecclesiastical state in Geneva. Like Moses, he regulated every action—nothing was to be unreligious. God was to be the ruler of the state, and the punishments were divinely severe. Every citizen must be at home by nine o'clock; a child that struck its parents was executed; card-playing was punished by pillory; a woman who sang a worldly song to a psalm tune was whipped; everything was to be as dull and ugly as possible, so that religion might supply the only imaginative recreation, the only pleasure or excitement in life. Servetus, a Unitarian, was burnt: he was a traitor.

Meantime, Paul IV. had been elected Pope.

Pope Paul IV. had lived the life of a monk and a priest before he acquired the triple crown; but after that he exchanged austerity and self-denial for pomp; he lived like a prince; he passed three hours at his dinner, while cardinals talked with him but did not sit down and dine with him; and he enjoyed the thick, black wine of Naples. He denounced the Spaniards as scum of the earth, spawn of Moors and Jews. He actually leagued with France and Turkey to make war on the most Catholic of Princes, Philip II. of Spain; but thereby obtained only defeat, his towns being sacked and burned, their inhabitants robbed, killed, and ill-treated. Yet he would not make peace until Alva, the victorious Spanish general, humbly begged for absolution for having fought against his Pope; nor did either party gain by this singular war. Nowhere were Paul's peremptory orders for the suppression of heresy better obeyed than in Spain. Of Jews and Moors, enough had there been burned before the Lord: the doctrines of the Reformation had now reached Spain by means of Lutheran

troops who had served abroad beside the Spaniards, and by forbidden books. Now (in 1559) it was ordered that all heretics should be denounced in the confessional; one-fourth of the property of each criminal should be given to his accuser; all who bought, sold, or read prohibited works should be burned; in a single day in Seville eight hundred were arrested. The evidence against each man was only communicated in so far as the Inquisitors saw fit; the witnesses were unknown to the prisoner—the rack, the cord, and pulley aided his replies.

In the great square before the Church of St Francis the king himself viewed the second *auto-de-fé* at Valladolid. A scaffold on one side waited for the condemned. First came a body of troops, clearing a way through the crowd (all who were present at the spectacle obtained an absolution of forty days); next the penitents in black, each attended by two familiars of the Holy Office; then the condemned in loose sacks of yellow cloth and conical caps, both embroidered with flames and devils, and each attended by two priors, exhorting repentance; next magistrates, magnificent judges, nobles on glittering horses, and clerics with downcast eyes and finely-decorated stoles; then the mounted members of the Inquisition with their banner, and attended by gentry, who guarded the Holy Office; after these the jostling mob; Philip, his sister, his son, Don Carlos, and the ambassadors, these have the best places of honour; the bishop begins his sermon; the Grand Inquisitor then proclaims an oath, which the multitude, kneeling, repeat, swearing to defend the Inquisition, to maintain the purity of the faith, to inform against all who swerve from it. Philip, too, swears, drawing his sword. Those admitted to penitence now kneel in turn as their crimes and sentences are read out; they abjure their errors and are absolved, being punished only by perpetual imprisonment or some light punishment; all, however, are doomed to the confiscation of their property, and most to inability to all public offices, and this inability descends to their immediate posterity. The impenitent, pale from a year and a half of imprisonment in complete darkness, unsteady and distorted from torture, now listen to the recital of their crimes; the Grand Inquisitor consigns them to the corregidor of the city, asking him to deal with them in all kindness and mercy; those who confess their sin being strangled *before* they are burnt, while the others

are slowly burned to death, falling at last unconscious into the flames. One, attempting to address the spectators, has to be gagged, and burned with his tongue twisted by the gag, lest he should speak when in the flames. For the Jews and Marranos (or converted Jews who have relapsed) do usually consider it religious and honourable to proclaim the unity of God in their last moments of consciousness. Unfortunately, in this age of unfaith we are so accustomed to live with people who have a different religion, or who have no religion, that we should not like to burn those whose false beliefs are likely, not only to eternally damn themselves, but to spread an infection of perdition over an ever-increasing number.

By 1570 all the Protestants in Spain had been burned, and the Inquisition was obliged to return to inferior sacrifices: lapsed Mohammedans and Jews.

Although Philip II. was one of the most Christian kings who ever lived, his laws against the conquered Moors are astonishing. They had been converted to Christianity by priests who could hardly speak their language. They were accused of performing the ceremonies of their own religion in private, while attending Church in public. Philip decreed that they should be forbidden to speak Arabic, three years being allowed for them to learn Castilian; in two years all must wear Spanish clothes, and the women must go about with uncovered faces from the time of the passing of the laws, although among Mohammedans this is considered most indecent; nor shall they use their national warm baths, as there were most absurd rumours that these were perverted to licentious indulgences. One offence was to be punished by imprisonment for a month, banishment from the country for two years, and a fine of from six hundred to ten thousand maravedis. The second offence incurred a double punishment, and the third added to the former penalties banishment for life.

But the day of vengeance came. Many Christians, chiefly spinners, lived among the Moors. Suddenly, at night, in a snowstorm, the sentinels in the capital were killed; then throughout the whole district almost all the Christians were killed. If they took refuge in the churches, the holy places did not protect them; crucifixes were broken and churches desecrated. Some, with pinioned arms, were cut in pieces by a crowd of struggling swords, hatchets, and bludgeons; some monks were put in boiling

oil; a priest was several times made to fall from a high beam. The priests, who had compelled the Moors to confess their sins, *who had made them attend services, calling over a list of names to see that none remained away, who had made them kneel before the crucifix*,—the hated priests were tortured more than all others.

The Spanish generals who avenged this rebellion conducted the war like a religious war: priests fought, crucifix in one hand, sword in the other; prisoners were sold into slavery; Moorish chiefs were torn to pieces with red-hot pincers; Spanish armies knelt to God before a battle; the Spanish soldiers raped Moorish women and tore the jewels from their bodies; prisoners were massacred in a night riot; rather than fall into the hands of the Christians women threw themselves down precipices; a large number of prisoners, tied together by cords, were driven far into exile into New Castile—many dropped dead of hunger or fatigue on the road: their beautiful cities, carved and painted, gay with flowers, with fountains, and with Moorish turrets, became mouldy, broken, and strewn with foul weeds and rubbish: in the end the gibbet, the pincers, the sword destroyed the captives; starvation killed those who fled to the rocky mountains; the crops were burnt, the trees cut down; fires were lighted at the mouth of caves to suffocate those who had fled into them; and when peace had been restored the remnant were tied together and driven into exile. Their own language was forbidden to them; they were compelled to live in houses appointed to them, from which they might never journey; their lives were deprived of life; they were compelled to be neither Moors nor Spaniards. So they lingered till, later, under Philip III., they were expelled from Spain.

Meantime, as the Dutch did not like being buried alive or burnt by the Inquisition, and as Alba could not execute them fast enough, Spain was engaged in a horrible religious war among the flat, misty waters and fields of the Netherlands as well as among the snows and rocks of Granada.

In France the usual persecution of Protestants was followed by a short truce; then came civil war, commenced by the Dukes of Guise, nobles, and soldiers, who massacred two hundred Protestants as they were worshipping in a barn at Vassy. Protestantism had spread chiefly to the more educated and upper classes: Calvin's followers, coming into France, preached it. *It was a political as well as a religious*



*movement—a means of conspiring against the Guises*, whose power as guardians of the young king, Francis II., had been really absolute:—after preliminary riots and massacres in the early part of Charles IX.'s minority (Catherine de Medici ruling) war begun: the rivers, red with blood, carried Protestant and Catholic corpses, now faster and now slower, floating, sinking, entangled by the bank, and broken against bridges: behind the armies there was desolation and death, and in front of them death and desolation, as people forsook their cities and homes to escape the advancing troops;—of the cruelty with which the war was waged, I will say only that it was a holy war,—a war for the suppression of heresy, a war to aid the publication of Christ's true message; lust, robbery, murder, and torture were employed by both armies, and the Protestants burnt the bones and tombs of kings and the pictures and images in churches. At length peace was arranged: the Reformers were granted liberty of conscience, amnesty for the past, and were promised undisturbed enjoyment of their property, honours, and offices: in every official district one town was appointed, in the suburbs of which Reformed worship might be celebrated; the barons and lords invested with superior jurisdiction might hold Reformed services in their chateaux for themselves and their retainers, while the inferior nobles might do so for themselves alone.

In 1567 the Huguenots, afraid that their leaders would be imprisoned and killed like Egmont and Horn had been in the Netherlands, plotted to seize the young king: the plot being discovered led to a second war. A second peace, essentially confirming the previous one, was issued in 1568; but soon after its concessions were withdrawn, Huguenot worship stopped, their ministers exiled, and Protestants deposed from public offices. Another war followed and another peace, slightly more favourable to the Huguenots.

Catherine de Medici grew jealous of the power which Admiral Coligni acquired over the weakly, wicked young Charles IX.; the admiral, as a Huguenot and as a patriotic Frenchman, wished the government to help the Netherlands, who were about to rebel after the preposterous tax of the tenth penny had been imposed by Alba and had stopped all the business of the country. Catherine's methods were the Italian methods of the period: Coligni was shot at but not killed. The Huguenots in the streets of Paris cried out for justice, for punishment of the Guises, Catherine told

the king that she had ordered Coligni's assassination, but only for the sake of the king's safety ; the Protestants were plotting against him. Orders were given for an assassination. Marshals and superintendents of different districts of Paris received instructions. The murder of prominent Huguenots was specially arranged. At a given signal the leaders collected their assistants and murdered the defenceless Huguenots, sending the signal to all other districts of Paris and to most of the large towns. The whole number of victims in the massacre of St Bartholomew's Day, which lasted two days and two nights in Paris, and then spread over the provinces, is variously estimated at from 20,000 to 100,000, of which the lower number is probably the more accurate. The weak-minded king, who loved bloodshed, for he used to tear the entrails of animals killed in hunting and to cut the throats of asses and mules which he met on the road, sat at a window shooting with a gun, and calling out "Kill." The Pope ordered a *Te Deum*, and Philip II. laughed with joy on hearing of the news. Probably the massacre had been arranged long before, and Coligni shot at in the hope of provoking Huguenot riots, which might excuse a violent and "unpremeditated" revenge.

Charles IX. died, and anarchy reigned in France. Leagues were formed and fought one against another ; Huguenots and Catholics made war, and highwaymen and citizens robbed and murdered ; there were no taxes, law, or government ; the public offices, the Crown lands, and privileges were sold and farmed out ; until, at last, Henry IV., having become a Catholic in order to be able to restore order, made Sully his minister, and brought trade and solvency back to the country.

Henry IV. was murdered by a fanatical Catholic, who believed the king to be still a heretic by conviction.

*The Protestants in France retained a strong political quality*, which it was, later, the work of Richelieu to destroy.

In Austria there was nominally more religious toleration than in any other country in Europe ; but the kingdom was made up of separate states, not well subordinated to the Crown and not submissive to it :—in a Lutheran city there was a fight between the mob and a procession of solemn Catholic priests with banners and with emblems. The street fight led to the quartering of a Catholic army in the city and demands for Catholic churches for the army to

worship in ; a Protestant union of princes and a Catholic league were formed within the kingdom ; Ferdinand II. hanged, banished, dragonaded Protestants, burnt their heretical Bibles and books, razed their schools and churches ; Frederick V., Protestant, and in rivalry with him for the German imperial crown, opposed him.

Ferdinand easily won in the war that issued, and, after executing and banishing, ordered all Protestants to leave the kingdom before Easter, 1626. Soldiers plundered and murdered : some Protestants defended themselves. Frederick retired to the Palatinate and, after some fighting, was persuaded to make peace, believing that his German claims would be recognised. The reformed ministers were driven away, and the library at Heidelberg University carted to Rome. The adventurer Wallenstein, with an all-devouring army of adventurers bound neither by the old feudal claims nor by modern devotion to their country, fought for Ferdinand in a manner which devastated the possessions of both friends and foes.

Of the thirty years of war that followed I need not say much, since in course of time men fought because they were fighting—they forgot the holiness of their cause. Gustavus Adolphus, who was obliged to bring Sweden into the war, fought religiously—his soldiers, like Cromwell's, sang hymns and psalms before a battle. Richelieu, at first only a monetary supporter of Sweden and the Protestant princes, acquired more and more influence in the war, which he joined only out of political ambition.

In the Peace of Westphalia, 1648, that concluded the war, I wish to direct attention to these points :

Ecclesiastical possessions and rights were restored to their condition in 1624 ; ecclesiastics who had changed religion since then had to give up their offices. The intolerant principle *cuius regio eius religio*, that a man must worship in the manner of his ruler, was abandoned. In the Diet, Catholics and Protestants (including Calvinists) were to be represented ; "but except the above-mentioned religions, no other shall be admitted or tolerated in the holy Roman empire." (Hehenegg, Lutheran court theologian in Saxony, said : "We ought to love our enemies, but the Calvinists are not *our* enemies, but God's.") In the eighteenth century this clause of the Westphalian Peace was used against the pietists.

To what extent the atrocities of the Thirty Years' War

are to be attributed to religion I do not know:—"the power of the armed over unarmed was exercised with bestial ferocity; it is said of the Imperialists that they baked people in ovens," roasted them, put out their eyes, cut strips off their backs, cut off limbs, put burning pitch on them. Just the same things are reported of the "(Protestant) Swedes after their degeneracy after the battle of Nördlingen. The 'Swedish drink,' manure-water, poured down the throats of the poor wretches was their invention." Especially in the south and west, Germany became a wilderness; wolves and robbers lived where fields and towns had been; the population of Augsburg was reduced from 80,000 to 18,000, that of Frankenthal from 18,000 to 324; in the Palatinate in 1636 only 201 peasant farmers remained, and in 1648 there was only a fiftieth part of the population left. After the war, in this district whoever repaired old houses was made exempt from taxes for two years; "whoever built new ones, for three; whoever brought waste lands into cultivation again for one, three, or six years." In some spare moment amidst the war Frederick III., imitating a decree originally invented, I believe, by Gregory XIII. but which had before been copied by both Catholics and Lutherans, commanded that the Jews should be compelled to listen to a Christian sermon every Sunday—the sermon to last one hour:—sleeping and talking during this time, as well as insufficient attendance at it, to be punished. The treatment of the Jews during this period may be summoned up by saying that they had to live in Ghettos, (regulated by such rules as that strange Jews visiting them must go to bed in good time, and they might not have visitors without the knowledge of the magistrates), and that very pious Calvinists, Lutherans, or Catholics occasionally expelled them from different cities or provinces.

Holland has the honour of being the country in Europe in which religious toleration was first established; but we must see a little more accurately how this happened.

The leaders of the Dutch rebellion against Spain and Philip II. were not so much moved by zeal for Protestantism (some of them were not very religious) as by a just indignation at the burnings, burying alive, executing, and preposterous taxes introduced by Alba and the Inquisition. After the terrible losses occasioned by the war with Spain they were not likely to permit a renewal of aggressive

religious intolerance. The power of the Pope declined greatly throughout Europe in the course of the wars of which I have been speaking, *all of which were not only wars of Protestant against Catholics but also of constitutional government and of recognised liberties against tyranny, against illegal interference by popes or kings.* The reformed churches never possessed the power which the Catholics had had :—they persecuted when they could (as in Geneva under Calvin), but (I am glad to say) the less religious, more secular powers, did not let them acquire too much power.

In 1608 the supreme council of Holland and four ministers, after listening to a dispute about free will between Arminius and Gomarus, reported to the states that they thought the disputants might exercise mutual toleration as to the points on which they differed. But the servants of holy religion (especially Gomarus) found it necessary to abuse one another. The “class” of Alkmaar,—a meeting of ministers, deacons, and elders,—suspended five ministers from their functions who sided with the unpopular Arminius. The state endeavoured to make peace, but the Church would quarrel. At Rotterdam Geselius tried to stir up his congregation against going to communion with the Remonstrants or Arminians; the secular magistrates exhorted him to moderation, and at length forbade him to exercise his disturbing ministerial functions. The clergy argued, and the government several times endeavoured to procure peace :—the two parties retired into separate churches : fanatics went to the church they did not like and excited riots : the question became political, involving the point whether the Church was above the state, or whether the state—that is, the combined interests of everyone in the country—ought to be placed above the Church. Both sides armed themselves. At length the Synod of Dort was convened, and a large number of ecclesiastics argued in Latin before a few “political commissioners,” only one of whom understood Latin; and, finally, a number of Remonstrants were condemned to be deprived of their offices and eighty of them to be banished. After a long and very illegal trial three prominent men, who were statesmen and Arminians, were condemned—one to death and the others to banishment. The political charges against them (which were untrue or concerned defensible acts) were mingled with charges such as, that they had intruded into the Church heterodox preachers and allowed each

province to manage its own ecclesiastical affairs, and had opposed the application of remedies to "disorders" in Church and state. Fines and imprisonment were decreed against Remonstrants, while Catholics, Jews, Anabaptists, and Lutherans seem to have been allowed freedom of worship. The usual massacres and riots followed:—what the preacher hints at the mob does. However, in 1631, some of the banished Remonstrants (or Arminians) ventured to quietly return to their native country. The indignant consistories and synods of the "orthodox" reformed churches petitioned the states to "put a stop to the insolence of the Arminians" by renewing the decrees against them. The provincial clergy were powerful and began to stir up the mob: therefore the states issued a decree against the Remonstrants: but the secular authorities and the more educated classes were tired of holy quarrels and the decree was only slackly enforced, Remonstrants being even elected to public offices. The "sorrowing church" again petitioned; but the senate and stadtholder, gaining confidence, refused to aid them in their efforts to serve God, and two of the most turbulent contra-Remonstrants were banished from Amsterdam. Now it is in this style that religious toleration has almost always been introduced. The dominant sect or religion persecutes as long as it has power: but as Church and priest grow less powerful inquiry and reason are tolerated, by the secular government.

We must look a little at the reformation in England.

Henry VIII., as I have said, persecuted Catholics and Protestants:—the former were traitors, who recognised the Pope instead of the king as head of the Church, the latter were heretics, who worshipped illegally. The young Edward VI., under Cranmer's guidance, proceeded further in a Protestant direction, and people were imprisoned for hearing mass and for similar offences. *In England it was at first a Reformation by command of king and ecclesiastics:* the people submitted, and, of course, preferred the reforms of Edward to the terrorism of Henry VIII. Queen Mary's mother, Catherine of Aragon, had been persecuted by Henry VIII. under a religious pretext:—Mary was a Spaniard, and considered that the new sect had injured her. The Church property had been alienated and much of it sold at moderate prices to the middle classes. When she ascended the throne, therefore, Mary dislodged the reformed clergy, and parliament offered to restore the old faith if

no restitution were made of the Church property. Many protestants (two hundred and fifty, it is said), were executed and burnt. Later, Mary, by order of Paul IV., asked Parliament to allow her to restore to the Church the property which the Crown had retained:—this was done, to the great discontent of the nation. Mary also helped Spain in the Spanish-French war, and this was also very unpopular,—England thereby losing Calais. *Hence, as the unpopular Mary was Catholic, her reign greatly increased the fervour of the Protestant party in England.*

Elizabeth wished to be tolerant. She went to Mass: she discouraged disputes: she permitted the use of English in the services: she restored the liturgy of Edward VI., but so altered as to give less offence to Catholics—omitting passages about “tyranny of the bishop of Rome,” and so on; but the Pope excommunicated her, Catholic Spain, France, and the English adherents of Catholic Mary Stuart plotted against her, and, finally, Philip II. attempted with the Spanish Armada to invade England. Consequently, the persecution of Catholics increased as Elizabeth’s reign continued: from 1570 to 1580 twelve priests, and from 1580 to 1590 fifty priests, are said to have been executed, and fifty-five banished. However, Puritans were also punished, being imprisoned and banished, and two Barrowists or Brownites were hanged. Many fled to Holland or New England.

In the reign of James I., as on the Continent, Protestantism became connected politically with constitutional government and recognised liberties as opposed to a king with divine rights and no duties. Parliament became distinctly Protestant, imprisoning a few Catholics (a few were killed) before the Gunpowder Plot, and after the plot (for refusing the oath of allegiance with its clause denying the power of the Pope to depose the king or absolve his subjects from their allegiance) sixteen seem to have been killed, and many fined. On the other hand, Prynne had his ears cut off for a Puritanical libel—in the index of a book he wrote: “Women actors notorious whores,” after the queen had been acting. The king himself hated the Puritans (or extreme Protestants): he enjoined compulsory Sunday sports, and endeavoured to make the Scottish church episcopal.

*Charles I.’s illegal taxations, arrests, and quarterings of soldiers increased the Puritan power, because the Puritans*

*were in politics usually something like what we should call Radicals.* Illegal and oppressive political government was also associated with Laud's efforts to make the Church more Catholic:—hence the Puritan party was strengthened by many who were politically discontented. The "popery" which Charles tried to forcibly introduce into Scotland led to riots. Hence, when parliament was in arms against the king and desired the aid of the Scots against him, they were obliged to enter into a solemn league and covenant before they could obtain it,—a league binding them to preserve the reformed religion "according to the Word of God and the practice of the best reformed churches," to endeavour to extirpate popery and prelacy—that is, Church government by bishops and such hierarchical persons—and to preserve the liberties of the kingdom and the rights and privileges of the parliament. A large number (1600?) of Anglican clergy were imprisoned and dispossessed when this oath was imposed on all civil and military officers and all beneficed clergy. If Charles had consented to allow a non-episcopal church he could, perhaps, have retained the throne. In opposition to the Presbyterians, numerous sects of Independents arose, most of whom, tired of the incessant quarrels of priests, wished to subject the Church to the general laws of the country and to make each congregation manage its own affairs without a clerical aristocracy. At the same time the Independents included a host of fanatical Nazarenes—gloomy persons, caricatures of Old Testament heroes—without the "palm-trees and camels"—photographs, 'hard and colourless, of once poetical ideas.

Of Cromwell's government I will merely point out the pious cruelty of his manner of waging war in Ireland; he wished for religious toleration,—allowing the Jews to openly return to England, and Quakers also to worship in the manner which they desired:—laws against Catholics and episcopalians were retained, for political reasons, but leniently administered. Pious clerics protested against the return of the Jews.

In many instances the later arguments about the prayer-book and the government of the Church concern only the inner constitution of the Church of England: but as the act of uniformity made fellows of colleges and school-masters give assent to the book of common prayer, it was also a general persecution. The wearisome persecutions of



Catholics and of dissenters under Charles II. do not seem to concern us in detail: they were apparently mainly political in their motive. The king, from secret liking for Catholicism, with its absolute government, was on the side of toleration: parliament and the bishops on the side of persecution, of test acts, of the conventicle act, and so on. Under Charles II. and James II. many dissenters were imprisoned.

Under William and Mary the Act of Toleration exempted all who would take the oath of allegiance (to the Crown) and the declaration against popery (which may be considered a political necessity), and such ministers as would subscribe the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, except three and a half, from all penalties of existing statutes; it also gave indulgence to Quakers without this condition: no toleration, however, was extended to papists or to Unitarians. Pious clerics, especially High Churchmen, protested against this Act of Toleration. Still more tolerant laws were rejected by the House of Lords, by Tories, and bishops: but a law passed against Catholics was apparently never administered.

Legal recognition of Nonconformity was established at the beginning of George III.'s reign.

We have now glanced at the Reformation, and let us consider what we have seen.

Martin Luther was opposed to all revolt against established powers. But if you kill your father, and then buy a piece of paper coming from the Pope, your father will still be dead, and will afterwards decay: it must be so, whatever anyone says:—so said Luther. Then, when anyone says: "Thus says the Pope," I shall have to see for myself whether what they say be true, even if the Pope did say it. And how can I tell if it be true? Religious as Luther was, he saw that we can tell, because there is an order, a uniformity, an unalterable connection between certain successive sensations produced in us, such that we *always* find (so far as we can test the matter) in our experience, that dead fathers are not revived by pieces of paper.

To speak simply, Luther began to compare what the Pope said with facts; he translated the Bible, and made every man his own priest; he did far more than at first he intended to do; he said more than he knew; he said more than he wanted to say. For its own sake Luther cared

little for reason, but he was obliged to encourage reason, learning, and investigation in opposition to a blind faith in the established Church: the Reformation was a triumph of rationalism. Luther cared little for liberty, but when men make the priest mind his own business they are obliged to restrain his friend the despot. Luther hated religious toleration, but when men had destroyed one holy tyranny they would not permit another to grow up. There never were any real ages of faith: there have always been sceptics. Why else were so many defences of Christianity written during the Middle Ages? But, when once reason began to be tolerated, literature and art and science—in short, all that we term civilisation—naturally progressed wonderfully. This is one reason why the Reformation did not affect Italy much: in Italy pagan literature and art had always been more free from Christian tyranny than in countries farther from the Pope. Near the Pope, the Pope was only the Pope:—they knew his father and his mother and what he was before he was Pope.

If it be held that man's greatest happiness can be attained only by his believing in a lie, then Luther can do nothing for you. And if man is to believe what he is told, or what he reads in a book, and not what he himself perceives, or if there is no fixed order in the universe, then Luther and I can do nothing. But why eat dinner or go to bed, or how am I to know what to do, if food will not feed, and sleep rest, and the universal harmony of cause and effect, the always experienced, unalterable connection between events, the un-miraculous reliability of the universe, is not continuous? If it be not so, of course all knowledge is nothing, because knowledge can only exist if the same cause always produces the same effect: if there is no order at all anything may happen, and observation is of no use—determines nothing. As long as people are religious knowledge can never be increased: nothing is known, invented, applied—there is no advance of civilisation: witches are burnt and drowned, dragons fly through the air, giants thirty feet high live in distant lands, and heretics are burnt. As soon as men reason about their religion they cannot burn people who differ from them; a religion which reasons cannot persecute, because our reason may always be a little wrong. As long as every phenomenon is the direct act of God there can be no science: science can only deal with an orderly and constant system. The world

to the scientist displays everywhere an unvarying law : to the theologian and cleric it displays everywhere divine intervention.

In 1662 Charles II. incorporated the Royal Society of London "for the improvement of *natural* science," the word *natural* being used in contradistinction to supernatural science. It was an age in which scepticism—that is, reasoning and examination of evidence—was beginning its great conflict with religion, with faith, and acceptance of ancient knowledge, which is usually incorrect. The clergy protested that the Royal Society would destroy the established religion, injure the universities, and upset ancient and solid learning. In 1752 the Royal Society helped to introduce the Gregorian calendar into England, in consequence of which some of its fellows were chased through the streets by a mob, and one who died shortly after was said to have suffered a judgment from heaven. The clergy were not wrong in protesting: religion had (partly unconsciously) begun to retreat before knowledge. The eighteenth century was proverbially the century of scepticism: Sunday newspapers appeared about 1780, debating societies, public meetings, encyclopædias, first began to spread knowledge and inquiry among the trading and working classes; an immense advance was made in science—to give a few examples: the balance was invented and exact chemical investigations made possible; Newton published his "*Principia*"; Watt invented the steam-engine.

To actually compare the happiness of Europe before the Reformation with its present happiness seems to me almost impossible: certainly men are much happier when they have enough to eat than when they have not; and we can obtain some idea of relative condition with regard to such questions. Pious Europe in 1430 was undrained; great nobles like Thomas à Becket were covered with vermin; wars and riots, pestilences and famine oppressed men, and shrines and relics protected them: work for the agricultural labourer was irregular, and hours of labour longer than with us; much fewer goods could be bought with his wages; on the other hand, he still possessed common and pasture rights which the modern labourer has lost; the monasteries were good landlords, but became so unprogressive and stupid, as the Church decayed, that their lands produced less and less; far from being examples of virtue, the monks

were the joke and scandal of their neighbourhoods—prostitutes lived inside many monasteries.

I would ask those who wish to make comparisons for themselves between the two periods to remember to examine more than a single class of society: the apparent prosperity of nobles or clerics may exist in an unhealthy condition of the entire state. Further, historians with limited sympathies may be safely followed if they have a conception of the laws of evidence and a sense of justice which forces them to state the facts of the opposition case; but if to limited sympathies they unite a hasty "Thus saith the Lord" method their opinions on these general questions cannot be of use.

Monopolies are always bad for society. The Reformation introduced competition in religion: before then Rome had ruled men's thoughts with inquisitions and confessions; their purses with "works," taxes, indulgences, masses; their bodies with penances, relics, pilgrimages, and monasteries; their governments and kings with bulls, legates, excommunications, intrigues, and armies. Competition weakened both competitors; it led to toleration, to Agnosticism, to thought, and to a great improvement of the churches and priests who had to compete. Philosophy in France and Wesleyism in England repeated the work of the Reformation by criticising churches, and so competing with them that they had to put their houses in order. Toleration encouraged thought; with increased education it was no longer necessary to choose statesmen from the Church. In early times all the ministers were clerics, and half the House of Lords; in the middle of the eighteenth century only one-eighth were spiritual lords; in the middle of the nineteenth only one-eighteenth. In 1801 the House of Commons was closed to clergy. The clergy retire more and more from the week-day world—they can only protest against the more flagrant offences of knowledge—as when Jenner invented vaccination, or when anæsthetics were first applied in obstetric cases, and the use of them was denounced as an impious attempt to escape from the curse against all women in Genesis.

At length, in our own day, they try a new weapon: they are quite worldly and scientific themselves. Either the Bible was only written for the common people, or else, when properly understood, it explained evolution thousands of years before Darwin, and Jesus foretold the telegraph and

the electric light ; or, perhaps, the miraculous events are not historically true, but they are not the essential part of the book.<sup>1</sup>

Faith, which is based on *authority*, causes us to know and think about what we cannot know, and not to know and to think about what we might know ; it is science alone, or rather, scientific methods, *reasoning and examining evidence*, which have enabled us to advance. Observe, for instance, the methods of an investigator in 1621 :

Aerial spirits or devils are such as keep quarter most part in the air, cause many tempests, thunder, and lightnings, tear oaks, fire steeples, houses, strike men and beasts, make it rain stones—as in Livy's time—wool, frogs, etc. Counterfeit armies in the air, strange noises, swords, etc.—as at Vienna before the coming of the Turks, and many times in Rome, as Scheretzius (1 de spect. c. 1, part 1) ; Lavater (de spect. part 1. c. 17) ; Julius Obsequens, an old Roman, in his book of prodigies (ab. urb. cond. 505) ; Machiavel hath illustrated by many examples ; and Josephus, in his book de bello Judaico, before the destruction of Jerusalem. All which Guil. Postellus, in his first book (c. 7), de orbis concordia, useth as an effectual argument (as indeed it is) to persuade them that will not believe there be spirits or devils. They cause whirlwinds on a sudden, and tempestuous storms ; which, though our meteorologists generally refer to natural causes, yet I am of Bodine's mind (Theat. Nat. i. 2.) they are more often caused by those aerial devils, in their several quarters ; for *Tempestatibus se ingerunt*, saith Rich. Argentine ; as when a desperate man makes away with himself, which, by hanging and drowning, they frequently do, as Kornmannus observes (de mirac. mort. part 7, c. 76 *tripudium agentes*), dancing and rejoicing at the death of a sinner. These can corrupt the air and cause plagues, sickness, storms, shipwrecks, fires, inundations. At Mons Daconis, in Italy, there is a most memorable example

<sup>1</sup> It is not usual to give authorities when no statements are made that cannot be found in any respectable histories of the respective times and peoples. But I have used Gieseler's "Text-book of Church History," Robertson's "History of Christianity," Häusser's "The Period of the Reformation," Cox's "The Crusades," Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," J. W. Draper's "A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe," J. W. Draper's "Conflict between Science and Religion," Buckle's "History of Civilisation in England," Prescott's "Philip II.," and "Ferdinand and Isabella," Grätz's "History of the Jews."

in Jovianus Pontanus: and nothing so familiar (if we may believe those relations of Saxo Grammaticus, Olaus Magnus, Damianus A. Goes) as for witches and sorcerers in Lapland, Lithuania, and all over Scandia, to sell winds to mariners, and cause tempests, which Marcus Paulus the Venetian relates likewise of the Tartars. These kind of devils are much delighted in sacrifices (saith Porphyry), held all the world in awe, and several names, idols, sacrifices in Rome, Greece, Egypt, and at this day tyrannise over and deceive these Ethnics and Indians, being adored and worshipped for gods. For the Gentiles' gods were devils (as Trimegistus confesseth in his Asclepius), and he himself could make them come to their images by magic spells; and are now as much "respected by our papists (saith Pictorius) under the name of saints." These are they which Coudan thinks desire so much carnal copulation with witches (*Incubi* and *Succubi*), transform bodies, and are so very cold, if they be touched, and that serve magicians. (Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy." In Part I. Section II. Mem. 1, Subs. (2). A digression on the nature of spirits, etc.) And so on for some 739 pages. Just as Christianity is true, because it says so, or seems to say so, in the gospel according to St. Mark and Milton's "Paradise Lost," and Augustine's works, and those of Ambrosius, and Gregorius Nazianzenus, and Spurgeon, and Bunyan, and Bishop Hall, so, too, is it certain that sorcerers, witches, and magicians can heal and harm by spells, cabalistic words, charms, images, amulets; as may be read in Bodinus *Demonamantia*, and works by Josephus, Erastus, Langius, Constantius, Wierus, Luther, Erasmus, Bacon, Sir Matthew Hale, Coke; in Innocent VIII.'s bull against the witches of Germany, which led to 500 witches being burnt *in one city in three months*; or in the English Act of 1604, under which 70,000 persons had been executed up to 1680.<sup>1</sup>

These witches, some of whom were mad or hysterical, were the victims of holy ignorance and of saintly irrationality. They died in order that people might have faith, in order that people might not doubt Jesus; the world would have been happier if they had not been tortured and killed, but men would have doubted, and would have had to change their opinions. "They died alone, hated and unpitied. They were . . . the worst of criminals," their relations feared and shrank from them. In 1590 a "white witch"

<sup>1</sup> Lecky's "Rationalism," and "Social England," edited by Traill.

was tortured by a cord twisted round her temples for an hour till she confessed ; and John Fiars' nails were torn off and pins run into their places ; his legs and hands were also crushed, in the presence of James VI. (later James I. of England), till he confessed ( "no one was ever sentenced till the crime had been 'voluntarily' confessed") to have been at a witch-meeting in a church ; many were pricked with pins, or burnt with matches until the insensible spot was found on their body which showed their guilt (this local insensibility is often a symptom of madness, being due to decay of the special nervous centre in the brain with which the affected nerves communicate) ; they were scourged, tied up with an iron bridle so that they could not lie down, and which tortured their mouths with four iron prongs, or were kept awake by skilful persons ; they were wrapped in sheets and dragged through ponds, with their great toes and thumbs tied together, and if they floated near the surface were condemned as guilty (though if they sank and were drowned they were innocent) ; they often persuaded themselves that they were indeed the slaves of Satan :—none remember them as martyrs, they died for no truth, their memories are friends of no one's courage or efforts for liberty ; they were the victims of faith, the defenders of holy ignorance against reason and observation ; men *felt* they were guilty, it was impossible to argue about what was so generally established and so obviously probable. There are witches in the Bible. If you begin to doubt, where will you end? To give up witchcraft, said Wesley, is to give up the Bible.

Science has not done everything for us yet. If I were stoker on board ship I should probably not be enthusiastic about the wonderful invention of steamers. Our aim must be to increase life, which does not consist in the number of lives but in the total of seeing, hearing, feeling, thinking, admiring, in the total quantity of growing, characteristic consciousness. Effort and thought have increased our powers and liberties—they will increase for us beauty and intelligence.

Imperfect as these remarks have been we have yet seen that religion has not altogether helped mankind. We have seen that Christianity (a collection of myths and false conceptions similar to those of most savage peoples) was first introduced to the world or evolved in consequence of political conditions and was mainly spread over Europe by

force or bribery ; we have seen that from the earliest times Christianity was broken into sects who quarrelled and killed, burnt and tortured one another ; we have seen that they waged war with infidels for the sake of obtaining a sacred relic, and fought so savagely as to injure themselves and wantonly torture their enemies, but in the end did not succeed in obtaining the holy object ; we have seen that Jews and Moors were burnt, tortured, exiled, and oppressed to the glory of the God of the Christians ; we have seen that hysterical or innocent or mad people, known as witches, were also tortured, drowned, and burnt ; we have seen that the Reformation, although in part it was a movement against sanctified vice, holy beastliness, anointed crime, and sacred fraud, was strengthened and extended by political causes and by force ; that the Reformers burnt, killed, and tortured those who differed from them, but that, as the secular government never allowed them to obtain the power which the old Church had had, their crimes were necessarily more restricted ; that owing to the decrease in the power of religion, together with increased facilities obtained through the introduction of printing and the discoveries of voyagers, knowledge and humanity were greatly advanced after the Reformation ; that the Church, reformed or unreformed, has always objected to every increase of knowledge, and always endeavours to hold men back from further civilisation ; it protested against the earth going round the sun, against the use of anæsthetics, against Darwin's theories (and Darwin is perhaps the greatest Englishman who ever lived—a man, who, like Plato, was not merely a naturalist, a botanist, a poet, or a statesman, but has influenced all thinkers and stimulated every kind of intellectual activity), for the Church always wished to substitute for fresh observations and original reasoning the old holy errors.

If it is to be one of our aims to obliterate the divisions between men, the divisions of class, of nationality, of prejudice, and even of sex, in so far as the sexes are unnecessarily trained to be apart, religion has done what it could to delay us, and perhaps to hinder the breeding of a higher race of men, since sects, like nations, tend not to intermarry.



## NOTE ON THE "BLOOD ACCUSATION"

UNFORTUNATELY, this subject is not yet of purely academic interest. We still hear of trials in the east of Europe in which Jews are accused of murdering because they need blood for ritual purposes. The question has been discussed in long and learned books; we know that many of the nations of antiquity accused one another of secretly sacrificing human beings; for instance, the Romans said that the Christians killed a baby at their private communions. After reading the first section of this essay you will understand (from the "communion theory" of sacrifice) that it is probable that in early times men (with minds at a certain level of development) did sacrifice human beings; the rituals of the Greeks and Romans show surviving traces of such sacrifices. Babies would be preferred to adults for the purpose, as the killing of a baby is with primitive peoples always a very much slighter crime than the killing of an adult—and the religious ceremony would be retained as necessary and pious long after killing in general was regarded as criminal, murderous. But the idea is one not likely to fade from the human imagination, from tradition, when the actual deed was discontinued. The deed itself would also have been continued by an ever-decreasing number, as a superstition, a more and more secret and incomprehensible charm, after it had disappeared from the official religion. Now it is a law governing the human mind that conceptions are always retained in the most concrete form possible—unless, at least, the mind is, either consciously or through educated habit, restrained by an effort for accuracy: children and savages are too impatient to listen to, or to discover abstract explanations: they make nature and history easy to understand and to remember by personifying, and by attributing the story of any event to some person or people known to them. The game of "make believe," in which the child pretends to be Robinson Crusoe or a stoker, illustrates this effort towards concreteness—the effort to realise a conception, to bring it near. When, then, the tradition of human sacrifices is retained, as it would be, it will be transferred to some definite people. Of course, the fact that no "stranger" (Gentile) should be present at the Passover evening service, and the connection between Passover and Easter, when Jesus was sacrificed, helped the story

to attach itself to the Jews; people wished to know what the Jews did on that evening, and therefore guessed an explanation. I have never seen it noted in connection with the accusation against the Jews that the same charge has been brought against gipsies. "Quiñones recounts how, in 1629, four Estremaduran Gitanos owned, under torture, to having eaten a friar, a pilgrim, and a woman of their tribe; and in 1782 forty-five Hungarian gipsies were beheaded, quartered, or hanged on a like monstrous charge. First racked till they confessed the crime of murder they were brought to the spot where their victims were said to be buried, and when no bodies appeared they were racked again. "We ate them," was their despairing cry; and forthwith the journals teemed with accounts of eighty-five persons roasted by gipsy cannibals; straightway the 'cannibals' were hurried to the scaffold. Then Joseph II. sent a commission down, whose inquiries showed that no one had been murdered—except the victims of the false accusation." (*Encyclopædia Britannica* 9th edition. Article "Gipsies," by F. H. Groome.)

I believe the above to be an explanation of the myth which was the means by which the Kishineff massacres were brought about, and I venture to think that those who say that the accusation against the Jews could not have spread so far and continued so long, unless partly true, display their ignorance.

## VII

"Waste not your hour."—FITZGERALD'S "Omar Khayyam."

"Not to sin, to do good, to purify your mind: this is enlightenment."

"Dhammapada" (attributed to BUDDHA).

THIS section is a digression on missionaries in China. It is an interruption to my argument, and may be omitted by those who feel disposed to do so. The facts are taken from an article in the *Daily Telegraph* by H. W. Lawson.<sup>1</sup>

The missionary in China "is distinctly not a favourite with the trading and official community," but "as a political instrument has, by common admission, been used by all

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, 13th June 1900.

the great powers in turn." A C. I. missionary in Szechuan, with twenty-five years' experience, claimed to have converted a vast number; "his figures were too round to be accurate." Most of the would-be converts hoped to gain by their conversion in material respects; many were converted when engaged in lawsuits, believing that a little foreign influence may be of use with the Yamen; "when it is commanded or may be commanded, by foreign cannon." They take away the missionary's card as a token of membership and use it in the law courts. "Foreign devils" are seen to be acquiring more and more influence, and it is supposed that their aid will later on be valuable in obtaining appointments. When in his street addresses the missionary mentioned the iniquities of opium the Chinese answered: "you brought it here"; when he said he was a man of peace they cried out: "You took war to Africa." "The anti-missionary party . . . say the converts are 'rice Christians,' coolies who have turned their coats, or their consciences, for their daily bread. Mr Morrison calculates that each missionary converts about three-quarters of an adult each year." It is alleged that "*ill-tempered* enthusiasm" of missionaries "has irritated the officials against Europeans generally" and incited the population to riot and murder; thereby, no doubt, greatly aiding the introduction of the advantages of European civilisation. The Roman Catholic missionaries, especially, interfere largely with the administration of justice and the course of litigation for the protection of their coreligionists; thereby, no doubt, improving the level of Chinese morality. A hundred and fifty years ago a Manchu emperor publicly rebuked a Roman legate, saying: "How do you dare to interfere with Chinese life, when your very language moves the Chinese to laughter?" Missionary Chinese is said to be a peculiar and esoteric language, whilst their knowledge of Chinese classics is of the slightest character. Naturally this helps them in the moral education of people whose thoughts and conceptions of life are quite different from their own. The converts are mainly drawn from the lowest classes of the people. "One of our up-river consuls" said the squabbles of the various sects were the bane of his official existence, and showed a Chinese placard, which had been posted all over his city, in which one sect insulted another. These placards are calculated to make the *litterati* reflect "how these Christians love one

another." "Protestant clergymen say that the Catholics set up drug stores in every Chinese city they can and put them in charge of native converts, so that when children are brought to be doctored the shop attendant may be on the watch and enable the priest to baptise them." "Supposing a Chinaman becomes a Christian and refuses any longer to subscribe to the religious rites of his" trade guild, the missionaries "often guarantee on his behalf an equivalent subscription to some good local charity. So, too, in regard to a man's livelihood." Some of the money sent to missions is well spent on education . . . and "one only wishes" (says Mr Lawson) "that more of the money sent by the pious to China went in the same helpful direction." "It is beyond doubt that the hatred of the Chinese against missionaries is much greater than their feeling against any other sort of Europeans, and this feeling is social and not religious." The Catholic priests find the great similarity between the Buddhist ritual and that of the Roman Church very useful. "A Chinese St Peter is a wonderful object, but perhaps, after all, he is not more intrinsically absurd than an early Christian in the dress of a mediæval Flemish burgher."

In other countries it is complained that missionaries disturb religious ideas which are in conformity with the stage of mental development of the peoples and without convincing them of any higher conceptions, so that they "relax the bonds of morality without effectually substituting any new ones."

No one but a lunatic could give money to societies for the conversion of Jews after reading particulars of the cost of each converted Jew. Besides, I suppose it is more important to live rightly than to believe in the Trinity. But apart from certain doctrines, which I think false, such as "Do not resist evil," but which are only of academic interest, since no one uses them, the New Testament teaches the same morality as Judaism.

## CONCLUSION

"There lies the burden on (the author's) mind—the burden of truth to be declared—more or less understood, and it constitutes his business and calling in the world to see those facts through and make them known. What signifies it that he trips and stammers, that his voice is harsh or hissing, that his method or tropes are inadequate? That message will find method and imagery, articulation and melody?"

EMERSON.

"'Christianity' has thus become almost a synonym of 'religion'?"

RENAN.

IN general I suppose people class all stories as either true or untrue. The historian or folk-lorist adds a third class: stories which represent not what happened but what someone saw, rumours and traditions evolved from actual events by the action of many inaccurate minds, and which have been affected by many "personal equations"—for instance, by bad sight, passion, piety, or prejudice, or attempts to be picturesque. Ill-health, exhaustion, ignorance, gross stupidity, and weak power of using words to express a meaning will all cause persons to distort what they suppose themselves to be reflecting.

Traditional accounts of any event—that is, accounts which have not been written down till a considerable time after the event occurred, are certain not to be absolutely accurate. Like everything else in the universe, the changes which traditions undergo are governed by laws. Similar minds—that is, minds in the same state of culture, under similar conditions tend to produce similar ideas, myths, and tales. Indeed, as the possibilities are much fewer in simple than in complex brain structures, the myths and conceptions of very primitive peoples do closely resemble one another. Very primitive peoples have no conception of nature, everything is due to the action of a being—they do not see that there is an orderly scheme in which causes are connected with effects. By continued experience men learn that there is such an order: they distinguish between the ordinary and the exceptional, between the natural and the supernatural, and they conceive the former as existing in an unalterable manner, while they continue to regard the latter as under the guidance of powerful or divine beings. But the older conceptions are not suddenly forgotten by a multitude of people; they are gradually transferred from "matter-of-fact statements of no unusual interest" to

mysterious possibilities, vague poetical tales, and exceptional wonders.

Now, in traditional tales of great men stories previously existing in the minds of the narrators are transferred to the hero: thus (to give one example) the tale of William Tell and the apple is much older than the time of Tell. By such transferences the existing story is infinitely improved, because it no longer happens to some man, somewhere, but to a well-known, concrete hero. The usually scanty information about the hero is also increased. If the people among whom the traditional story is being evolved are in a sufficiently low state of culture these added incidents will be nearly all miraculous.

Now in very early times it is obvious that man will not understand the process of birth. There is, indeed, an enormous number of stories, both fairy tales and sacred and historical tales, held to be true, in which children are born after the mother has eaten a magic fish, fruit, seed, drug, powdered skull, pebble, flower, or leaf, often presented to her by a wise bird, beast, saint, ascetic, or witch; in some cases the food aids the natural process, in others it is the sole cause of the birth. In other instances the hero's mother bathes in a pool, or is acted on by a wind, a vapour, the sun, a look, or the touch of a feather, a heath, or a powdered skull. Among many primitive people women desiring children do actually bathe in holy waters, eat mistletoe, rice, rosemary, spiders, and other nasty things, and touch parts of dead people in order to obtain the force, soul, life or power contained in these things.<sup>1</sup>

After the idea that birth is due to holy power, to supernatural influence, has been partially superseded by the experienced relation between cause and effect, it will still be supposed that people may occasionally be born without the ordinary process from extraordinary causes. Now it is a law governing the human mind that conceptions are always retained in the most concrete form possible, unless, at least, the mind is restrained, either consciously or through educated habit, by an effort for accuracy; children and primitive peoples make nature and history easy to understand and remember by personifying and (probably later) by attributing the story of any event to some person or people known to them—they try thus to realise the conception, to bring it near.

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. of E. S. Hartland's "The Legend of Perseus." Google

This explanation will probably be held to be quite sufficient for every recorded "supernatural birth," except only that quite exceptional one of Jesus Christ, which is supported not by the authority of priests and peoples who worship pagan deities who were born supernaturally but by the authority of those priests and people who worship Christ.

And similarly, just as so many savages and early religions have an idea of "tabooed," of holy and sacred and unclean things, which have derived or possess great powers, so also had the same idea arisen among the Jews, and in accordance with this idea the holy Jesus was supposed to heal by touch.

In order to understand sacrifices and communions, which are not explained in the Bible, we had to go back a long way in the history of man. We might have expected that this would be so, because "blood covenants," and to a less degree their more evolved descendants, sacrifices, and communion ceremonies, are so very widely spread; and, as I have said, it is the earliest rites and ideas that will be common to the largest number of peoples. Among the Jews sacrifice has disappeared from practice, owing to their external, political history; but the blood covenant is maintained in a form, that of circumcision, which fairly well preserves the original meaning. That original meaning is the sharing of one life between several, either by smearing some one substance (usually blood) on the persons concerned or by their eating or drinking of some special substance in common. The thing eaten was originally conceived as being akin to the contracting parties.

In Christianity the sacrifice has shrunk to a half symbolical form. The communion also is in what, speaking from a folk-lorist's point of view, I should call a degraded form—that is, however much it has advanced morally and intellectually it no longer clearly expresses its meaning, but is confused, worn away.

In order to illustrate the idea of a sin-offering I had to try to show the confusion which exists in early minds between a man, his property, his words, and his tribe. The whole conception of a sin-offering or of a blood feud is a survival from times when the clan was so closely interconnected that an injury done to one member of one clan could be avenged on *any* member of the clan, one of whom had done the injury, and when, conversely, the suffering of one member injured all the members of the clan. Among savages, injuries done to a man's cut-off nails or hair would

injure him, and a wounded man may be healed by giving medicine to his relations, and a father must not go hunting or eat solid food for fear of injuring a newly-born baby (so-called "couvade"). In the course of an imaginative interlude in the form of a dream I illustrated these ideas by practices of witchcraft in which injuries done to an image injure the person whom it represents, and where one person is made to die instead of another, or powers are transferred by charms and potions from one thing to another. All these cases involve a supposed substitution, or partial substitution, of one thing or person for another; in Christian doctrine Christ is substituted and suffers for the whole of the humanity with which he assumes kinship.

Although I might have compared many other stories in the Bible with stories believed by other people I think I should be scarcely likely to convince anyone who is not affected by what I have said.

I then tried to explain that consciousness is due to physical causes and that we have no knowledge of a spirit. As Lucretius said (somewhere about 40 B.C.):

"If the nature of the soul is immortal and can feel when separated from our body, we must (I think) suppose it provided with five senses; and in no other way can we picture souls below flitting in Acheron. . . . But neither eyes nor nose nor hand can exist for the soul apart from the body, nor can tongue nor ears exist for the soul apart from the body." Nor (as I tried to make clearer to you) can thought or feeling exist apart from the body, nor religious aspirations nor "knowledge" of God.

And I think every candid person will agree with me when I say that we have never heard of any quality of God which is not a quality of the human mind; and I cannot see how the human mind could ever understand any quality except those which it possesses. And if a God condemns men to endless pain in hell, it seems to me that he injures them; and on earth, I believe that pain is injurious and we should try to decrease it, and dulness and ugliness are not virtuous.

Every man ought to be completely happy and healthy in body and mind. No man can be happy or healthy till all men are happy and healthy. But I omitted to say that no single man is responsible for the universe, and that in practice we must compromise, and often live as we can, and not as we should do if society were perfect. "We shall be right in calling vice a discord and disease of the soul," says



Plato : it is not a supernaturally forbidden deed, but it is a naturally bad one, injurious, unhealthy.

Then, finally, I looked at the history of Christianity, and I did not find many occasions on which to praise it.

I conclude here without much reluctance, knowing that all my readers will be able to apply the simple principles which I have tried to explain far better than I can, and I trust that they may be of service in many ways of which I have said nothing.

## AN ATTACK

### I

I HOPE that the following narrative, consisting of scenes in the life of a prostitute, contains enough truth to be of use in justifying my opinions :—

Terrible were the long, dull days during which she thought of her anxieties; she knew hardly anyone to whom she could speak of them. The landlady now said to her: "If you can earn no money, I can give you no food." The landlady was reputed a respectable elderly woman, with a hard face and dyed hair; she had often seen prostitutes in tears. Certainly this prostitute wept easily; she was alone, half starved, and anxious. She felt a pain in the left side of her stomach, and when that became bearable a weight replaced it; hunger gave her unceasing pains. After she was nothing except a torment in the stomach—that was her whole being. When she was alone she wept; she murmured words and gesticulated passionately. Sometimes her head ached and her mind grew hazy. She drank stout because it was nourishing and because it always made her a little sleepy and silenced her thoughts; there were often times when her thoughts hurt her. She had the nervous changeableness of a child. She could not read. . . .

Her mother had worked in the fields of Belgium. She, being pretty, had obtained a situation as an inferior maid in a hotel.

"These country girls are amusing," thought the lieutenant, when he first saw her. Her skin was pink and fresh, her nose nearly straight, except where a slight projection at the tip gave it a more vigorous charm. Her hair was a rather light brown in colour, her eyes almost like it, but with a slightly greener hue. Her figure, at anyrate when judged by classical standards, was too irregular in thickness—the waist was too violently curved, the ankles too thin, the calves and thighs too fat. She was rather clumsy in her movements, having an untaught mind.

The only excitement in her life was to hear her beauty praised: the lieutenant praised it and smiled. He often came to the hotel—this affair gave him an occupation. His face was not badly shaped, but the muscles on it were too prominent, and it was too much padded with fat. He was tall and muscular, usually ate and drank too much, but sometimes took hard exercise. He was pre-eminently a gentleman—he enjoyed life, and people liked to talk to him.

After all, it was true—she was prettier than most women; but every day she had to wash plates and dishes and clean rooms. Pain would be better than dulness. She sometimes cried when she felt very tired. Vanity became a passion to her.

The lieutenant's clothes were always good, his hair was always carefully arranged, his moustache always curled upwards. He took some trouble to amuse her when she was alone with him. He thought he did really like her,—she spoke sincerely. She was pleased because he liked so much to be petted by her and to have her on his knees. He took some trouble to seduce her prettily.

Brain-perplexing anxieties began to oppress her. "My dear child, be reasonable,—I am so busy, I have so much to do,—you understand, I could not afford to keep you entirely—of course, you will have to find another way of living,—don't worry about it, I'll arrange,—" the lieutenant began to talk like this.

She was about to have a baby. She told her mother, who raged with reproaches, but offered consolation and advice.

Violent emotions culminated in a reckless determination to do anything to earn money. • But dulness was only replaced by disgust. The lieutenant had seemed so kind,—now she knew what his kindness meant. She hated him;—sometimes when she thought of him her blood grew hot in an instant. He had spoilt her life—left her nothing but one trade. She was to some extent popular, and she enjoyed the society of men, who joked with her and gave her presents. But she became inwardly indifferent; we replace dulness by pain, and pain by a bitterer dulness.

This is an old story and yet new enough; if it happened to you you would see its sadness.

Life became monotonously tasteless to her; she wanted a passion instead of tears and laughter, whose cause was unknown to her. Her lonely hours were haunted by

formless suggestions of the incomprehensibly disgusting. She hid herself when she saw anyone in the distance who had known her as a servant.

It became no longer so easy to find the men who were to pay for her living and clothes.

She went to Paris. Sometimes in Paris she could not buy enough food.

She came to London. She hated the long hours of waiting in the streets; she hated the hot, airless nights, and the wet nights when her boots gradually let in the water, and the cold and the misty nights when her inmost body seemed cold. She was tired of looking at men's faces till one came who was searching and felt doubtful about her appearance; she was tired of the repetition of the same phrases: "Do you speak French? All the better for you if I am pretty—I am thirsty, will you pay for a bottle of beer—I am in a hurry, will you do it now?—thank you, good night": she was tired of dressing and undressing, of men looking at her underclothes, of smiling, of kissing, of being stroked. She grew tired of the pains of starvation.

She did not understand English and Englishmen. She was by nature proud, and went without food to avoid debt. She pawned her rings. Her mind always saw, more or less distinctly, her anxieties about the need for money.

When the streets grew emptier, after the theatres had closed, the hours of pain and weariness were long; the other girls, who were mostly more fortunate than she, laughed at her efforts. She feared that she no longer attracted men. She caught a chill and sometimes spat blood. Her body was sick, because she cried so much when she was alone. She could not sleep much. She was tired of loneliness, of sobbing, of her smiling, loathsome trade, and of pains in her stomach. She wrote to her mother, but no answer came. Was she alone in the world? Would no man again like the feel of her body, no one again praise her beauty, would the mother that cursed her with life feel no pity for her misfortunes? A man must be found—he must be coaxed to pay all he would—O God, how much better it was in Brussels, there I had a room like a lady's, and rich friends and wine and good food: now, if I cannot get money, the landlady will throw me and my luggage out into the streets. O God, perhaps it was better still when I was a servant: life was dull but settled. Yet, when a man stayed with me all night it was not

unpleasant. I felt happy as I ate breakfast with him, and felt that the day was open to enjoyment—for a little while I had no cares. How could I know, when I did not understand it exactly, what would happen? Why should I struggle to live? Life is a journey from pain to pain! there is nothing worthy of hope or despair. Once I thought I might some day kill myself; now I should always know that to-morrow I shall wonder why I felt so much moved to-day. . . .”

I assure you the machinery of civilised society is firmly settled: else how is it that I am sitting here comfortably writing? Nothing in our system should be altered.

## II

PERHAPS the English have the faults commonly found in people who have always been prosperous. The German is like a man who made a fortune in a minute—he boasts about his own talents and about how he outdid his rivals. The Englishman is more like one who has succeeded in a difficult profession; he does not boast, but he sees clearly how clever he must be. When abroad, he is too often like a coarse, rich man, visiting a workhouse; he behaves anyhow—whatever strange things he does can only show foreigners how superior he is to them. The rich are seldom amiable—they do not know the bitterness of the labours which they have not done, the wants they have not known; they also seldom understand cheap pleasures, like sunshine and pretty faces, that mean so much to people condemned to dull work and fretted by small cares. And in the same way the multitude in England can never perceive beauty, and are inclined to laugh at misery's deformities. Just as the prosperous do not wish to hear about misery, so also does that mysterious creature, the British public, dislike it when artists show it anything too much like life—life that is often ugly, terrible, or disgusting—or anything too violently impossible, imaginations that are often mad or distant. The successful man is always inclined to talk about the faults of his less lucky neighbours and to forget how much his own virtues owe to his good fate; the Englishman criticises the world in the same manner.

The English never fail to look at what shocks them, and the authors of it they damn. Indeed, they search for it with the magnifying spectacles of fear.

## III

THE English public is usually Puritanical and dirty-minded; do what you will, nature and beauty suggest nastiness and indecency to it. I believed that I cared for beauty and that in the naked human form there were certain manifestations of beauty, but when I drew nude forms or wrote about them the "pious public" sought suggestions of nastiness and (to my surprise) easily found them.

Clothes are more indecent than nudity. Nearly every woman tries to make herself—that is, her body—more attractive by means of her clothes. (Hence the similarity of conversation in the harems or female apartments of every land.) Our clothes increase the differences between the sexes.

However, I am not trying to prove that we ought not to wear clothes but only that there is *no* reason why artists should not use naked figures.

"Morality always changes on this earth as often as one religion arises and displaces another. Indeed, as a new religion arises in the world after the lapse of a few centuries, and entering into our habits proclaims itself as morality, every age, judging according to the rules of its own morality, would condemn the works of art of the past as immoral. As we have actually seen, good Christians who condemned the flesh as devilish have always felt vexed at the sight of the Greek statues of the gods; modest monks have tied an apron round antique Venus; even until recently people stuck a ridiculous fig-leaf on naked statues; a pious Quaker spent his whole fortune in buying the beautiful mythological paintings of Giulio Romano and then burning them—truly, he deserved to go to heaven for it and there be daily beaten with rods! A religion which placed God only in the material, and therefore considered only the flesh as divine, would, as it entered into our habits, produce a morality according to which only those works of art would be praiseworthy that glorified the flesh, and according to it Christian works of art that represent the vanity of the flesh

would be condemned as immoral. Yes ; the works of art, that are regarded as moral in one land may be regarded as immoral in another land where another religion has produced different customs—for example, our plastic arts excite the disgust of a strictly believing Mohammedan, and on the other hand, many arts considered quite innocent in the harems of the east are horrible to Christians. As in India the position of a *bajadere* is not at all stigmatised by custom, the drama '*Vasantasena*,' the heroine of which is a merchantable prostitute, is not considered at all immoral there ; but if they dared once to perform this piece in the *Theatre Française*, the whole *parterre* would shout about immorality—that same *parterre* which every day looks with pleasure at intrigues, the heroines of which are young widows, who in the end marry happily, instead of, as Indian morality demands, being burnt with their dead husbands."<sup>1</sup>

But, you say, it is for the artist's sake that we are careful : the making of drawings and stories might otherwise corrupt him. How good and charitable you are ! I often think it would be well if there were a religion in which we confessed our neighbour's sins ; most of us could do it so easily.

The sight of the entire human form in a moderately healthy and undeformed condition should suggest the disgusting to no one ; it is absurd and often inconvenient to an artist's scheme to be always obliged to make a strip of drapery or a branch of a tree cross his male figures above their legs ; besides, even to persons not habitually afflicted with a great moral power of perceiving the obscene, it leads the eye to one part.

I myself do not condemn those who made the Greek athletes stand throughout all ages gracefully and subtly posed, nor those who left gods and goddesses to be revelations of divine beauty to distant lands and ages ; I do not condemn Michael Angelo, who made his brave, desperate slave feel and suffer in every limb : I allow Titian and Tintoretto, Rubens, and Raphael to show me how the sea of mysterious light flows over the rounded figures ; and I will not blame heaven and earth and the law of all things because male and female have their beautiful forms. To the impure all things are impure.

<sup>1</sup> From Heine's "*Die Romantische Schule*." A little freely translated : I began in the middle of a sentence.

## IV

It is true, what has so often been said, that the material processes of life are disgusting; it would, perhaps, be excellent if the processes that we term spiritual could exist without them. To kill an animal, wash it, and do all else that is done before it becomes cooked meat and as dead as the vegetables—all this seems to me disgusting. The chemical processes of digestion and evacuation are nasty. But all these affairs are done automatically, and I have never felt any remorse because I had eaten meat. I never heard the sheep's opinion concerning the morality of eating sheep. Without considering the ascetic who told us to sell all and take no thought for the morrow, most of us obey our appetites without fuss or emotion, as well-trained servants obey their masters, and try to get as much food as we can comfortably eat.

But other parts of outward life are not so firmly settled. Europeans have generally adopted as their manner of marrying a mixture of monogamy and promiscuity. By this arrangement the bare, disgusting act of sexual connection—an act which, unlike the eating and digestion of animal food, we do not do automatically, without fuss or emotion—this is made to haunt as much as possible of life. To women who earn a precarious living by it, and who usually suffer from periods of starvation, it naturally becomes a main subject of thought; and it is surely no excuse for those who employ them that their chosen trade of prostitution seems in a few respects more pleasant than others by which they could have earned a living, and does not entitle them to complain more than others about life and society. Fornication is the most typical of all vices, because, often on both sides, it is the great symbol of selfish cruelty, reckless of another if it can gratify its own desire. It is not very comforting to one afflicted by a disease to know that others suffer from other maladies that are equally painful.

All the preludes to the act of sexual intercourse—the infinite occasions on which men and women can show kindness to and please each other and the poetic passions that love awakens—all these are magnificent; all these are soiled by the coarseness of those long-sighted from prudishness or from foulness or delighting in bawdy tales and obscene suggestions.



Indeed, when most favourably arranged, life is, to a considerable extent, disgusting. We can only seek the illusions that give importance to it and set our hearts in the vain labours that we are able and obliged to do. For without activity we cannot live; without emotion we have no motive power, no desire to act.

## V

I HOPE that the following narrative, consisting of scenes in the life of a labourer treated *imaginatively*, may contain enough truth to be of use in extending my previous remarks:—

Never do things appear so beautiful as when we cannot stay to see them clearly. Outside the windows of the railway carriage the wide sky was spread over fields, cattle, rivers, hedges, and trees; the train burrowed in the darkness of a tunnel, and when it emerged ferns and rocks and bushes sloped upwards on either side of the carriages; people got in and out again before Elms was tired of looking at them; when they left the train he helped them to take away their packages; he lent a paper to the woman who was seated opposite to him; he felt pleased with himself and with them.

He got down from the train. Under the blue of the upper heavens the clouds of pale purple and grey seemed to be becoming red-hot, heated by the sun that they hid; the hilly street beneath was a confusion of gay colours—red brick, pink and yellow plaster, brown carved wood, green creepers; little dark figures moved down it. When he had walked beyond the street the landscape was grey and cold beneath red bars of heat that escaped from behind the dark clouds. Lights marked the road that he was walking on, but the lamps were so far apart from one another that there was none of the mystery and variety of mingling shadows that sometimes gives so much interest to faces moving at night in a street. Here and there water reflected the golden lights, the dark trees and turrets behind them, and the night sky with its lingering streaks of golden red. Pale dresses and dark coats were embracing under the trees; from a distance came a sound of laughter. . . .

He did not know why it was so, but suddenly the whole world was wearisome to Elms. He longed for death and

the cessation of feeling and sensation. His eyes saw, and he wished to see nothing more. He hurried on; to his great surprise he found that he was shivering; his teeth chattered—he could hardly keep his mouth firmly closed. Farther in the darkness stood the noise and the lights of the fair; the whole landscape around it now seemed black. Up and down, but always round and round, moved the riders on the wooden horses of the merry-go-round; the flaring lights at its centre made shadows chase over their faces. He mounted on one of the horses; the cool air fanned him. Below, the whole fair reeled past him; men and girls were squirting water at one another. Shouts came from booths in which were shows, and sounds of shots from shooting galleries.

Beneath the trees he saw dancers with Chinese lanterns in their hands. He hastened towards them. The music seemed to say: Enjoy, enjoy, the next instant may be sorrowful. Limbs looked out in the rhythm of the dance from loose draperies and from shadows. Maddier and madder the motions became; the hot blood ran in a flush over Elms' whole body and he joined them. Less and less did his eyes behold of the bodies that danced; there were only staring women's eyes and open mouths and draperies that hid swelling breasts. Vaguer and vaguer the forms became, but their curves suggested to him the utmost filth, the obviously, incomprehensibly disgusting. His hurrying blood burnt him; reason was dethroned, mad impulse ruled him. He remembered vaguely all that he had ever felt of hatred or of disgust with the world, of weariness with vain labours, and of stupid despair. He longed to do that which was forbidden and foolish: he wished to do that which there was every reason not to do.

Suddenly from a distance came a sound of laughter, harsh, deep tones mingled with jingling ones; the laughter of those who see that for the sane there is no laughter; and the laughter of those who see a corruption like the decay of the world; the laughter of those who have felt the utmost misery; and the laughter of those who are utterly weary of life and yet will laugh. Leaving the dancers he hurried towards the laughter.

Then he stopped in confusion; cold tears ran down his hot cheeks. In the darkness he saw her who first had illumined the world for him with the lamp of love. She still looked as when he had known her, though years had

passed since then and he had loved and married another. "Why did you never let me hear of you again?" he said. "I looked but could not find you." His voice was hoarse and changed; she was as beautiful as he had ever believed her to be.

Like a dream she faded, and could not be clearly remembered; the whole landscape was dark and blank. Near him the train passed; the engine whistled as it entered the station. He hurried to the platform.

What can be more pleasant than a railway journey at night? Never do things appear so beautiful as when darkness hides them and we cannot stay to look at them. How charming is the subtle greyish green of the fields, with smears of greater darkness among it.

The calm silver moon was his only companion among the vague forms. Sometimes Elms was awake, but so near sleep that life had lost all its responsibility; sometimes he was asleep, but the train still murmured thoughts to him. And at length he reached the silence of his village and of his warming bed.

When he awoke the swallows outside the window were chirping as they circled round their nests under the roof; little children in bulging garments were already in the street; his wife and his boy were moving about downstairs. The garden of the cottage opposite to his own was gay with little spots of bright colour; beyond it was brown ploughed earth and yellow corn and the delicate greyish green grass striped with the darker bluish green of the trees.

"How did you enjoy it?" asked his wife when he came down to her. (The room seemed entirely brown and white in colour, the furniture was dark and old, the ceiling rafted, the china neatly arranged on the dresser, the table laid for breakfast.) "I am glad to be home again," he answered. "In the middle of the night Jimmie laughed loudly in his sleep and woke me," said his wife, speaking of their little boy. "Will you go to Mr Lake?" she continued. "Yes," he answered; "he promised me work if I went back to him after Mr Cramber's harvest." "Me want to go and see dad in the—in the fields," said the boy, in the slow, quacking tones of a young child.

Elms felt how pleasant it was to be at home on the land on which your fathers lived, even though they were its slaves and ate only its cheapest produce; he felt how

pleasant it was to be with his wife and to see the childishness of his child, and how pleasant to work in the familiar country, which yet, in happy moments, when the weather colours it favourably, or when your eyes are unusually attentive, seems so admirable.

## VI

WRITTEN some time ago, the above now seems to me weak and childish. Still, I believe it essentially true, and will only add that :

(1) All socially useful, altruistic feelings are encouraged by monogamy, since in common relation to their children parents are led to feel and to act in unison, and so become "more sympathetic in respect of more general feelings." Other manners of marrying tend to sever people from their natural duties to society, from benefits done to all by being bestowed on children.

(2) Women usually work in over-crowded, slightly skilled trades without co-operating in trades unions: they are therefore underpaid, having no means of ascertaining even the market value of work which must be sold to the wealthy to supply the needs of the present day. As soon as they are tortured by debt, with its incessant, peace-destroying, worrying demands, as soon as they are in want of sufficient food, desperate with dull, unending, drudgery—or without work, without a place in the busy throng of society—one thing alone, hinted at in every street, in every place of amusement, one means of earning money, is near at hand.

## MEN AND ANIMALS

AN old proverb says "All is fair in love and war." The thought must survive, in part, from times when no deed was dishonourable that hurt the enemy, the barbarians, the heathen—the people not allied to your own god, foreign devils—nations round about who had been to some extent cleared away, aliens (black and monkey-faced), persons not associated with our glorious history, whose sufferings do not connect themselves in our minds, with our sufferings, but rather with our triumphs and joys, and whose joys are connected with our defeats and sufferings. With us such feelings have largely passed away. The old Hebrew prophets dared to say that God would take of the Gentiles to be his priests, that he would have his house called a house of prayer for all nations, and that Egypt and Assyria should be named beloved of God and his chosen people, together with their bitter enemy, Israel, God's "inheritance." In their own way the prophets dared to be "little Israelites" and not "Imperialists." This part of the Messianic dream I should like to be fulfilled, and it will be fulfilled as soon as men understand that the happiness of one part of the civilised world aids the happiness of all parts, and that it will do so far more as humanity becomes more organically connected into a harmonious whole, each nation in which performs its own special function: so that, for our own sake, we should not so much observe that which is done wrong abroad and would not be done in England as endeavour to find the causes of the faults of our class and of other classes, of our own nation and of other nations, in order that they may be cured.

There yet remains, however, a large body who are treated as enemies were once generally treated, and whom we are not bound to handle according to the fairly definite enactments of any moral laws;—only, in this country and in our state of civilisation they are unarmed and defenceless enemies—we may hurt them, but they can scarcely make

us fear. It is certainly not usual to consider their sufferings as of the same value as human sufferings, and this is one reason why the usual manner of arguing about the ethics of our treatment of animals is unsatisfactory. No conclusion arrived at by trying to balance the pain given to the hare by the pleasure given to the dogs and men pursuing seems to me to be really effective, because, after all, we are not sure how much animal suffering we consider to be equal to a smaller amount of human suffering. But we can examine the value of our own *motives* in relation to our present condition. Our aim must be to cultivate in ourselves that degree of sympathy with living creatures that will best enable us to aid the progress of humanity towards a more harmonious society, in which the happiness of one is the happiness of all, and not to cultivate that degree of sympathy which, in an imperfect state, could only oppress us with a paralysing melancholy. If the faces in our streets meant to us all that they might mean, if we saw clearly the weary lifelessness of these anæmic faces, the desperate "fleshy bulginess" of those who can find no escape better than drunkenness and dull dissipation, if we understood these hollows and these ridges, if we suffered whenever a horse is ill-treated before us, if we cared too much for the sufferings of castrated fowls, if we consider the gradual starvation of birds whose mothers' plumage decorates bonnets, if we considered the gradual exhaustion of once fine but long oppressed bodies, if we thought of calves bled alive to make white veal, we should be of little use to anyone. We must cultivate ourselves—it is only by caring for ourselves that we can care for other people, that we can increase the quantity of thought, feeling, action, of intense life. You love yourself more than your neighbour in order that you may love him at all, otherwise you would never have any dinner. But as the advance of humanity is towards a greater degree of consciousness, a much greater degree of sympathy should be cultivated than seems obviously needed for the performance of our visible work, in order that we may encourage and transmit a tendency towards advancement.

It is obvious that the practical application of the principle I have tried to explain could only be decided by each individual for himself. As we progress, and become more sensitive to the pains of others, less and less cruelty towards them will be permitted to us. No civilised being (it seems

to me) ought to care to say that the sight of suffering gives him pleasure. And yet it seems to me (I may be mistaken) that in sport, apart from the pleasure of exercise, there are also pleasures of pursuit, of conquest, of seeing one animal fight with and destroy another. People whose ancestors have always hunted may enjoy these things, but it is precisely such people who must have inherited a faint pleasure in destroying life, a savage satisfaction in having cleverly obtained what, to savages, would be so valuable as food, clothing, wealth. I have the honour to belong to a people (as Heine once said) who used not to hunt because they were hunted, and, on the whole, I retain a slightly greater admiration for those who, when unable to resist, suffer, rather than for those who inflict suffering. I believe that worms do not suffer much when you put a hook through them, because their nervous systems are primitive (I cannot suppose them automatic and without suffering), but I do not like to see them look as though they suffered. I cannot conceive the idea of a fish being dragged through the water with a hook burning in its bleeding throat in any but the most sickening way. I am told that foxes are almost burnt alive in order to make them leave holes in which they have taken refuge. The country magistrate, who has a man imprisoned for working a horse while in an unfit state in order to earn a living, will himself go fox-hunting for pleasure.

To a person in good health it is very difficult to imagine what it is to be ill, and when we are comfortable it is very difficult to imagine pain. Yet pain to the sufferer seems far more real than pleasure. But I believe that sympathy is actually the great motive for moral actions, and I therefore suppose it to be wrong when we allow our pleasures to be directly dependent on and proportionate to our lack of sympathy.

With reference to vivisection, I am not competent to deliver a very definite opinion; but the obtaining of knowledge is a very respectable aim, and so real that I believe that many scientists would themselves suffer (and have indeed suffered in different ways) in order to attain it. It is by knowledge that we advance, that we increase our lives in depth as well as length, for mere length of life does not appeal to me. The anti-vivisectionists do not seem fair in their methods. It is needless to condemn a Nero, and he might enjoy vivisection for the sake of inflicting

pain, but the law regulates all vivisection in this country. "Experiment *in vacuo*, experiment on the chance, experiment in the pursuit of nothing in particular but of anything that may turn up," is, of course, detestable, but it is also illegal here and most probably does not exist. I quite admit that in foreign countries, and perhaps also in the first enthusiasm for a new method of research, abominable deeds were done: that, for instance, where pain is the subject of study, "the power to endure it, the thing to be measured," vivisection has been quite improper: but what is actually done in England to-day is to be found tabulated in parliamentary reports, and is done only by licensed operators, and cannot be held to be affected by what is or has been done abroad under different conditions. A recent case seems to show that the letter of the law is not respected, in that an animal is not killed after one operation on it. I do not know what is done on the Continent at the present day: if anti-vivisectionists could state the case against separate countries, under the present conditions only, the matter would be much clearer.

It must be remembered that unless a man experiments in secret, for the sake of inflicting pain, he acts for the sake of appealing to an audience, and I cannot suppose that his audience of specialists is likely to be more stupid, more unable to reason about what is being done, than the "average man." I should expect them, therefore, to be slightly less cruel in general than the rest of their fellow-countrymen, though, of course, they would care far more for knowledge, and particularly for physiology.

One other question connected with the subject occurs to me. It is generally admitted (we may feel glad that it is so) that England is less cruel to animals than other countries. Why is this? Briefly, I should like to mention as a few among the causes that our government is not very military, despotic, and obviously arbitrary, so that we are not accustomed to see might considered as the best right; that our institutions have been altered far more by development than by violent operations and revolutions, so that here, too, we are more accustomed to be guided by reason than by force; and because (this is an island) it is a very long time since we saw a war in England—in other words, our institutions are in advance of those existing in more military states.

In my way of arguing I have discouraged the balancing



of the animal's sufferings against our advantages: but, obviously, our estimation of the value of our motives will be affected by our conception of the animal's pain. Now I do not think it is quite enough to say that any animal suffers less than a man would. In a creature with a less complex and less exercised nervous system than a man any painful sensation would be less liable to arouse, to be associated with, a complex group of other painful sensations—an emotion. But, on the other hand, it could not arouse or be opposed by, pleasant sensations or pleasant associated emotions. A man suffering “unjustly,” when he is ill, for instance, may console himself with the idea of his own fortitude, may feel himself supported by all the lamentations in literature, may reflect on his own sensations and enjoy the pleasures of tragedy, may resolutely employ the excitement of his nerves to more vividly think and imagine other things. An animal, I imagine, has experienced almost nothing which could be revived in its mind in order to counteract pain. In children and animals pains and pleasures are more sharply divided from each other than in men, simply because they have much less power of voluntarily shifting the focus of their attention—the interconnections in their nervous systems are fewer and less easily set into action, so that they are far more limited to the sensation that is at first most prominent. This is obvious. A child cries or laughs because its mind is filled with the nearest sensation, so that its mind moves in an instant from laughter to tears. Admitting that animals do not imagine the probabilities of the future so much as men do in times of distress this deprives them of consolations as well as of troubles. And, finally, all mammals do not seem to differ much from man in their construction. I imagine that, on an average, the higher mammals suffer as much as a man would from the same cause, so that (for instance) an adult orang-outang feels an injury more than a human child would. But as the subject cannot be treated exactly (we cannot measure pain) I think I need only remind you that general experience supports my view. Horses are notoriously nervous, and dogs clearly show that they remember when they were whipped—in both cases animals evidently associate emotions with sensations.

In short, although (as I stated at the beginning of these remarks) as long as we do not really regard animal sufferings as much like the sufferings of one of ourselves, it is useless

to argue about wild animals as though we were joined with them in one community, instead of their being opposed to us as savage though weak foes, it would, I think, be better and truer if we did regard animals as being more closely allied to us, as being one link of the chain which, through savages and babies, leads to us and, onwards, to the more than man of the future.

## A SERMON

CONSIDERING that what Jesus said to one man is, with respect to most matters, not contradicted by what he said to others, and that, therefore, it cannot be held that his sayings were addressed to individual needs but were part of a system of morality, I can only understand that system to have been one of renunciation. Under an alien and despotic government, in the midst of constant rebellions, when only the most corrupt Jews would consent to assist Rome in governing, Jesus recommended men not to resist invincible evil; not to strive for money (the climate was kinder than with us), but to be voluntarily poor; nor to seek honour, but to be honourably obscure; to be satisfied with that strength of which none could rob them—the strength of a pure and undivided mind. For the sake of mental peace, a man should (he taught) renounce laughter and food (“Woe to those who are full”); forsake father and mother; if possible, become a eunuch; be free from all social ties and human services. This is quite comprehensible. Jesus has been so understood by a few heretics, a few saints (like St Francis of Assisi), and a few obscure sects. I admire these mistaken men, who, being convinced that God had spoken to them, did not refuse to hear what did not agree with their own opinions, but obeyed all that he had said. Except you become like little children you cannot do so: little children, who, when angry with a naughty world, go and play by themselves, not wanting worldly money and power.

But, as for you, when Christ does not agree with you, he does not mean what he said.

What does it matter to me if you say “Lord, Lord,” and do not do what he said? Saying “Lord, Lord” is harmless, and actions are of the utmost importance: and (you may say) “if we act wrongly you can reason with us without mentioning those errors which have no actual influence on our actions.” But saying “Lord, Lord,” and not doing what he said, brings you into a habit of “making believe” which prevents you from ever trying to see things as they are, without any unjustifiable inherited opinions of them:

if you are not able to see what happens you cannot reason; if you cannot reason you cannot know how to act properly. In considering certain subjects you deliberately dismiss from your mind all that contradicts certain ideas, and deliberately refuse to fairly weigh evidence for and against certain conceptions—that is, you place yourself with regard to these ideas in the attitude of one who is about to enjoy a romantic drama, a fairy tale, or a book of strange adventures, and who, during the time of reading, forgets the reliable multitude of evidence showing that things do not happen thus. In other words, you encourage yourselves to be double-minded, you assist yourselves to be hypocrites without knowing that you are. It is not romantic to deceive yourself nor spiritual to be blind.

There is no faith. All that we know is obtained either by observation, experience, and reasoning or by the observation, experience, and reasoning of others, which we have evidence to suppose to have been accurate, or by the observation, experience, and reasoning of distant, inaccurate times. It is the last named which is termed "faith." They teach it when we are young and when our minds have not strength and versatility enough to find alternative possibilities: later, when men, we say: "If these things are not true, divinely planted in my mind,—this Christianity, Judaism, Mohammedanism, or worship of some tree, animal, heavenly body, or stone—if not true—how comes it that I feel so convinced of its truth, feel it, see it so plainly?" But all who ever worshipped, worship the same god. They worship a being like themselves. The mind can conceive nothing higher than the mind. They put their own feelings and motives into a stick or stone or on to a heavenly throne; they impute their own virtues to their god. The Christian generously gives Christ all the good qualities that he ever hears of and calls all morality "Christianity." The only "faith" that "science" asks for is the admission of our acquaintance with certain elementary conceptions (mind, matter, motion) which cannot be analysed further, and whose existence, as known to us through comparison of our sensations, must be granted without further explanation. Having admitted these elements, the degree of certainty, which science would at any moment attribute to any alleged fact, is proportionate to the amount of evidence supporting that alleged fact (the net amount of evidence when contradictory minor alleged

facts have been balanced). It is not usual to talk about "faith" in things which are immediately apparent by the senses or are derived from classifications and comparisons of these sensations. I do not say that I have "faith" in the pen with which I write, nor in the fact that I know (by comparison of a large number of previous sensations, tactual and visual) that a peculiar arrangement of smears of black, silver, and other colours is a *round, cold, metal ink-pot*, open, filled with *liquid ink*, at about *one arm's length* from me on the table, and *too heavy to be blown away*. To a baby these smears of colour are only smears. It may be disposed to put its fingers into a bright red smear, not attaching to it that notion of heat and flame which, without thinking, we at once derive from sight of a flame. The process by which I gradually learnt to automatically associate a certain perception of these qualities (shape, weight, texture, size, and distance) with my mere sensations of certain coloured smears is essentially all that is involved in reasoning or acquiring knowledge; and yet I read in a book that science requires faith as much as religion.

Many things are less mysterious when you know what has been learnt about them than when you do not. It is impossible to argue about difficult matters with people who, never having studied any "science"—that is, any exacter knowledge—have no power of using words accurately, and no knowledge of the simple facts involved in what they are talking about. Let such people study elementary physics and engineering and do some ordinary "text-book" experiments in mechanics, electricity, and chemistry. Then let them read Darwin's "Origin of Species" and "Descent of Man"; any good modern text-book on psychology, and Herbert Spencer's "Principles of Psychology"; then Tyler's "Primitive Culture," Frazer's "Golden Bough," Robertson Smith's "The Religion of the Semites." If after they have understood these books they still believe in Christianity it will be worth while to hear what they have to say.

But probably when you have done all this you will be able to dismiss from your minds old errors and to try to know things as they are.

To my base, earthy, prosaic mind it appears that a few considerations (which I intend now to explain to you with brutal frankness) might, without so much effort, lead you to some of the same results:

Faith is not "the evidence of things not seen"; if you had never heard or read of the things you would know nothing about them. Faith is a greater regard for what certain dimly-seen persons, such as "Moses," Matthew, Mark, and Luke thought they saw than for what all fairly reliable people have seen. These unreliable people, whose real lives have gradually been covered with myths, had no notion of any order in nature: everything was the direct act of a will, of a man-like God. But to me, if any "miracle" ever occurred, there would be no order, plan, harmony, or law in the universe, and it would be impossible, therefore, to reason at all, or, indeed, to consciously do anything. Why eat dinner if nature is not uniform and it is not likely to nourish me as it has always been found previously to do? When I "believe in" the Bible I shall also believe in the Koran, the Avesta, the sacred Sanscrit books, Homer's poems, and a host of unwritten religious traditions. They all contain incredible, absurd tales in which a number of people, some of whom, in other respects, are clever, have firm "faith": but when I say of the Bible, "There are tales here contrary to all reliable experience in which I have firm faith," I shall not know how to object to these other tales, which can only be objected to as contrary to experience. In that day I shall also believe in all the miracles performed by all the (Roman) Catholic saints, by all the relics of saints, and at all holy wells, since many of these miracles are testified by men concerning whose lives we have much reliable information and who, in other affairs, were not fools. In that day, guided by the infallible light shed on my mind by inspired prophets who fasted in solitary places till they saw gods and demons; intellectually saved through the revelations of excited dreamers, who felt themselves destined to unite men with the gods; and instructed by tales, which represent the final traditional account of stirring events after generations of ignorant and inaccurate people had successively elaborated them and perverted their true forms by all their false and, from an ordinary point of view, almost incredibly beast-like conceptions of the universe: thus guided by many holy traditions and scriptures—Hebrew, Sanscrit, Arabic, Fijian, Aztec, Chaldean, Persian, Peruvian, and who knows what else—thus guided I shall walk secure and look down on mere geniuses and wise men, blind, groping, uncertain, trying to know, guided only by all-deluding reason.

## A LETTER TO A SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER

It is because I sympathise with your intentions that I feel disposed to criticise your methods. For if we grant that the motives for doing right which you teach are superior to those which I should teach, still, if I could help you, by adding further ideas to those which you suggest to your class, to make an impression on one boy who now is not permanently affected, it would be worth while to listen to me. The motive is important enough to the doer—thought is unfinished action—but not to have done wrong from any motive is better than to have done wrong after having the best instruction.

In general, what I should teach, and which you (as it seems to me) do not, is that each of us is a limb, an essential part in the body of society: what injures one member of the body injures every part of it, so that when a man does wrong he hurts *himself*. We all need help and love. A man may steal from others what he needs; but whenever he does this (or any other wrong deed) he makes it more difficult for society to exist, and a man cannot exist without some society, some exchange of benefits. A low pleasure is connected with the pains of others, and therefore afterwards recalls in the mind of him who enjoyed it painful ideas and images: it troubles and haunts him with unpleasant ideas: it keeps him apart from his fellow-men. It prevents people from willingly sharing pleasures with him because we cannot always talk to those who hurt us. People in general blame him for it: they may be obliged to punish him, because if those who hurt were not restrained no one could safely work and help all of us. I might say (if I may parody your style):

“We English are proud of our liberty. But what is liberty? It is chiefly the repression of everyone who would not allow others to do what he himself may do. Liberty does not mean that any man may do the first thing

that enters his head. *That* might be the most absolute tyranny, if one man happened to be much stronger than the rest. Liberty is that sympathy between men that causes each to refrain from doing to others what he would not have them do to him. People who are not free, who have not liberty, are replaced by others, because the bundle of sticks is not broken by the blow that destroys many separated sticks."

We ought to develop our minds, bodies, and feelings as much as we can in order to give pleasure to ourselves and to others. This we can chiefly do by effort. Our system of society is not perfect (we read much in the gospels of the wickedness of the world); but it is very complex, the result of all men's past efforts, and everyone must help in the very complex arrangement by which the many works needful for life and progress are carried on through a vast interconnection of parts, each of which fulfils a different function. Now no one can succeed entirely by his vices—they waste his energies. "Successes" are of many kinds: one man only gets money and another influences the thought and action of all succeeding generations, but all success demands a sacrifice of many passing impulses to an aim.

It needs some thought to see how great is the injury done by wrong. A man who represents what he is selling to be better than it is, and so gets a bigger price for it—or who in buying says he could get the same thing elsewhere for less when he could not, and so pays less than he ought—may see that he is rendering it more difficult for all men to talk to and to sympathise with one another, but he probably does not consider that he alters prices throughout his own trade, and, through it, throughout all trades, so that (in one case) all buyers pay too much (and in the other) all sellers get too little. He is doing his best to make everyone who produces poorer and weaker and to "ruin the trade of the country." In order that men may be strong and get stronger in mind and body each must receive according to what he produces, else the idle and incompetent would finally kill the others: but men are not statues, and cannot deal thus justly with one another and help one another if there be "bad feeling" between them, if we abuse and vex others whenever we do not want their help or when they are not likely to know who did it.

The two points liable to be forgotten that may appeal



to some prosaic, earthy boy who does not appreciate your method are, you will see,—

1. The expediency of virtue, though this is an unkind way of stating it, since we inherit a feeling of sympathy which causes us to do good without any thought of expediency; yet feeling without reasoning may often lead us astray, for even when it “means well” its methods may be harmful. The notion that “it does not do anyone any particular harm, even if it is considered wrong,” would usually be dispelled if people reasoned. Let us say, then, I should teach the reasonableness of virtue.

2. The duty of self-development by pleasure, where pleasure does not harm others or reduce our own powers of helping them. To this second principle you will at first sight probably object, thinking people already too eager for pleasure: but consider it in this way:

Most people need pleasure just as much as food. If they have not enough of both of these they become dull: they need pleasure and food to stimulate both their blood and their brains. Now I do not quite know what class of boys you are teaching, but probably if you could see them as they will be after another twenty years the change would horrify you. This change will have been caused not by too much pleasure but by too little and of the wrong kind, for when most people are unable to get the higher pleasures they take the lower. These can hardly be withheld from them, and (I am about to speak with my customary brutal frankness) you cannot prevent people who are occupied too much with dull work, whose chief place of freedom is the dull streets, from getting drunk, from fornicating, and from that unscrupulousness in business which really proceeds from a desire to get happiness or money quickly. The meek, weak, negative creatures leave things no better than they found them. Granted that the pleasures of a man’s own fireside, home life, and “trust in the Lord” are very satisfactory; but a clerk with twenty shillings a week, living alone in lodgings, with very few opportunities of talking to his fellow-clerks, will not extract a wholesome amount of enjoyment from them. Go to any music-hall and listen to the songs. What are the subjects of the *funny* ones? Drunkenness and the humorous behaviour of drunkards and hinted adventures with women and brutality to women (how a man gave his “old woman” two black eyes or

kicked his mother-in-law)—these are the chief subjects of the *funny* songs.

It may be harmless to teach your class to admire missionaries and to despise Pharisees, but it does not seem satisfactory to make these sweeping statements about subjects on which it is possible to rationally hold quite contrary opinions and yet to do one's duty here in the position to which Providence shall call you. Morality is always part of a civilisation. And in China, as in ancient Rome, part of religion has a political significance. The emperor is superhuman—whatever other gods you worship you must not contaminate his powers by disregarding his religious efforts which control heaven's treatment of the country. To teach that the emperor's holy powers are superstitions and nonsense is treason.

The exact position of the Pharisees at the time of Jesus seems doubtful. I am certainly not a historical authority, but no authority will, I think, dispute one or two statements. In "putting a fence round the Law" they aimed at so isolating the Jews that they might be able to survive in spite of the all-devouring power of Rome. Like Jesus, they thought it impossible to resist evil—that is, they thought it impossible for Israel to remain independent, unruled by Rome. They were, of course, right. Hence the importance which they attached to the fulfilment of laws which, by regulating minute details of personal behaviour, must be enough to separate a Jew from those around him without any more solid barrier. In my opinion they did succeed in subsequently causing one protesting voice to oppose itself to the tyrannous binding of thought. When barbarian chiefs, eager to absorb the civilisation of Rome, magnificent though decaying, punished with death those of their subjects who refused baptism; or when holy blackguards, called crusaders, devoting their energies to the most barbarous warfare, proclaimed "death or baptism"; when the Inquisition burnt, expelled, and tortured heretics—in those darker ages the Jews declared the value of thinking and investigating for yourself before Christian Europe conceived it, and it was the Pharisees who made the modern Jews.

The matter is only of academic interest, except in so far as the habit of condemning entire classes and trades is not a profitable one. I confess that to my agnostic mind it is doubtful whether the real Jesus ever said the sentences

condemnatory of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes as reported. They are not in accordance with his own teaching: "Bless them that curse you," "Do not judge and you shall not be judged," and so on. When the earliest Christians first began to teach that it was no longer necessary to obey the Law, or that Jesus was the son of God, it must have been the Pharisees and scribes that excommunicated them. Were the gospels written after that time or after the divergence and bitterness between the embryonic new sect and the special protectors of the old one had become great? It must be remembered that when Jesus teaches that no jot or tittle of the Law shall ever pass away (and some of the gospels report this, while others report statements which exactly contradict it) his entire teaching is not widely different from the entire teaching of the Pharisees. In this, as in all matters, consider what your main aim is, to which all other aims are to be subordinated. Is it not to teach people to act rightly? If the Chinese do worship ghosts, will that do much harm so long as they do not hurt the living? If my knowledge of the ultimate nature of the universe be imperfect, will that do much harm so long as I know how to live, how to behave, in the society of my fellow-men?

I ask you to enlist those whom you teach on the side of reason, intelligence, beauty, and the harmonious development of *all* the powers of man (artistic, scientific, physical and moral), and against the corrupting influences of wealth and misery, against cruelty and dulness, against brutality and vulgarity. "What can any one of them be expected to do?" you may ask; but that is a reason for teaching no morality at all, and even for practising none, for none of us, I suppose, are of much importance to the universe.







1. 1. 1.